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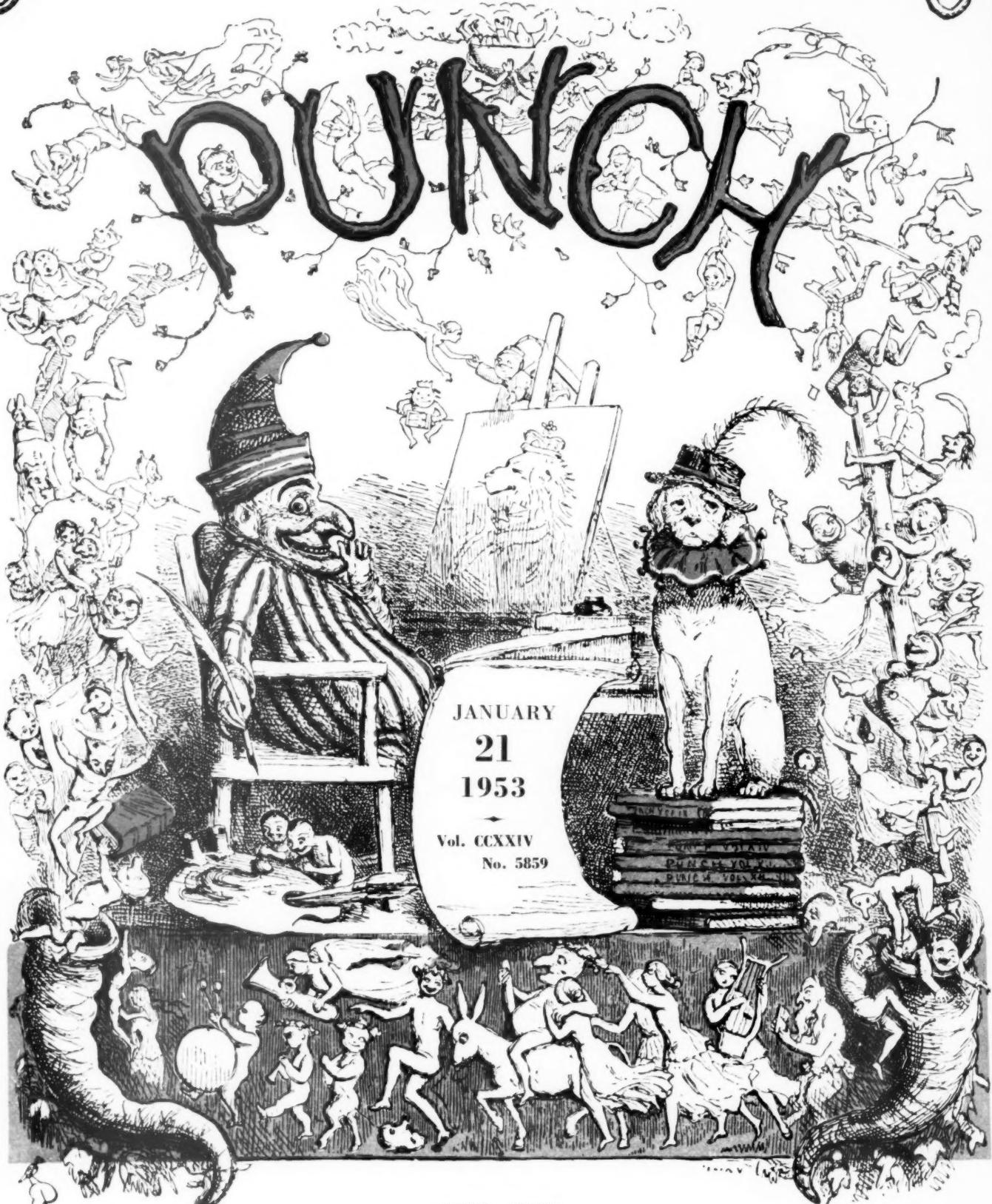
PUNCH

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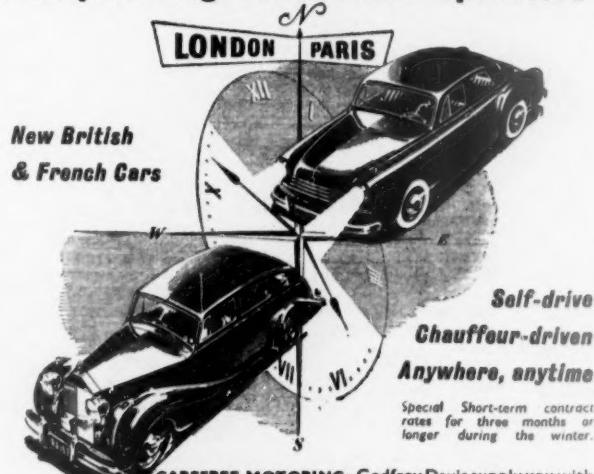
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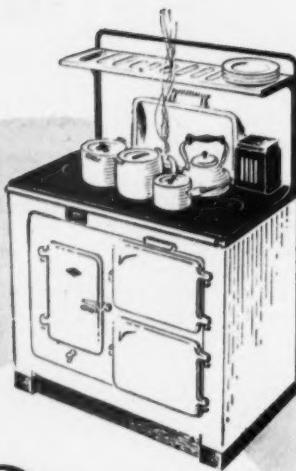
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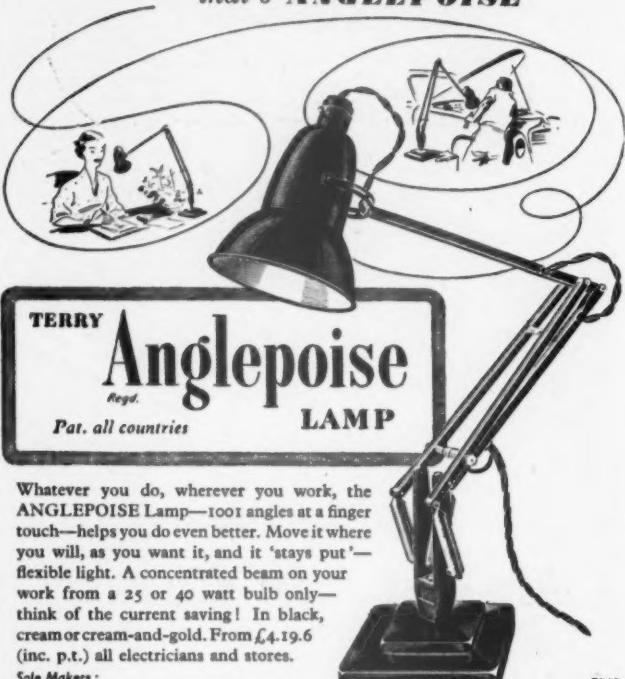
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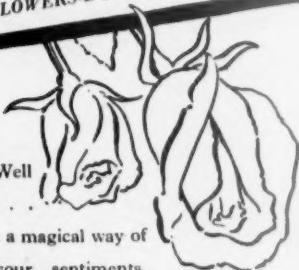
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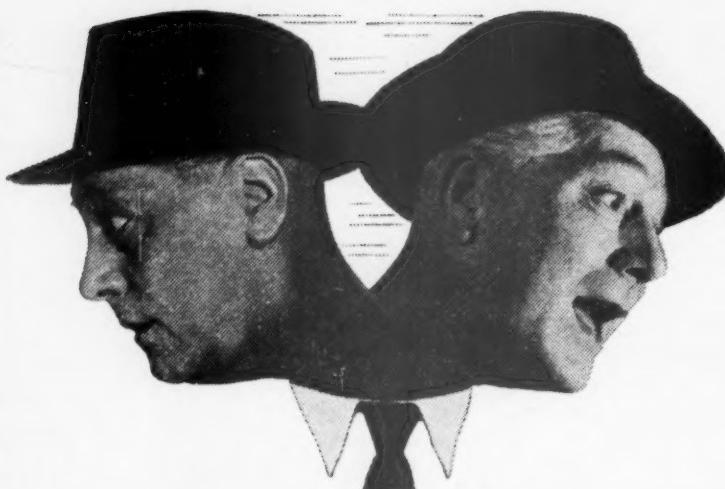
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Three Nuns

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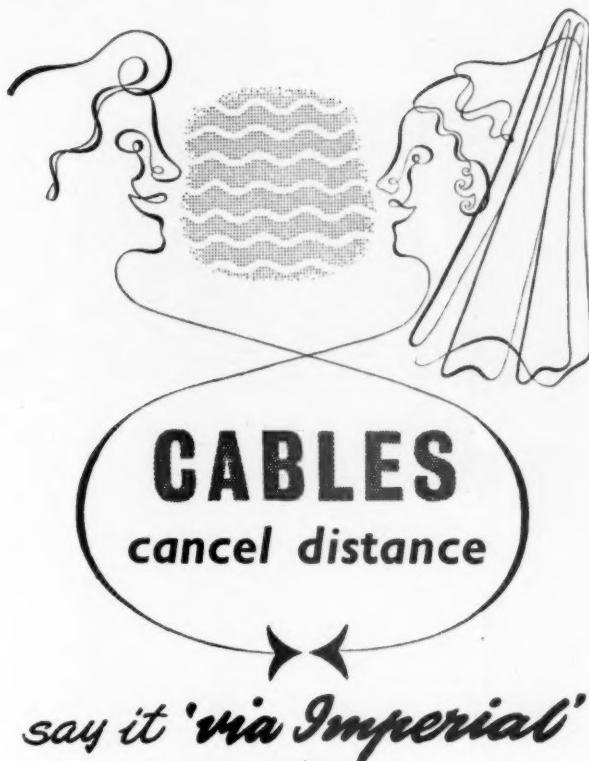


Enchantment lies in a glass of "Pintail"—and so connoisseurs are again happily writing cheques for personal supplies of this proud product of Spain. A special gift pack of two bottles is available for 42/4d, direct from Matthew Gloag & Son Ltd., of Perth, Scotland, who have been importing fine sherry since 1800.

"Pintail" is a quite exceptional pale dry sherry. You are invited to send your order right away.

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Of the things that a man may reasonably do to secure his own creature comfort, there are few simpler, and none more sensible, than taking a drop of Scotch whisky on the way to bed. You are leaving to-day for tomorrow. Take your leave graciously and pleasurable. Wish yourself well. Choose a whisky soft with great age, soft as a benediction.

For its gentleness and lasting glow White Horse whisky has long been famed. Trust a White Horse to carry you smoothly across the borderland of sleep. It knows the way.

WHITE HORSE Scotch Whisky



CHARIVARIA

"Punch has lost its first page—the Charivari (*sic*), that collection of quips and short comments to which such men as Thackeray contributed in their day. It is the major change of the first issue under the new editor . . ."—*Daily Express*

Fooled you.

2 2

Muddled thinking on Europe's problems is exemplified by resentment voiced at the recent exclusion of Britain from the Strasbourg discussions of the European Coal and Steel Community (E.C.S.C.). It is as dangerous to confound E.C.S.C. with E.C.A. (the European Consultative Assembly), as E.E.C. (the European Executive Council) with E.F.C. (the European Federal Constitution), or E.P.U. (European Political Union) with E.P.U. (European Payments Union), particularly in view of delayed ratification of the provisions of the European Defence Community, or E.D.C., and the whole O.E.E.C. situation. These matters touch us all, and it is disheartening to see the man in the street, instead of keeping abreast of them, reading with unashamed absorption a trivial news item in the *Daily Mail* headed "Girl Blown Into Drawing Room: Thunderbolt In Bath."

2 2

When Customs officials at London Airport insisted that a raw steak, brought from Amsterdam by an American, must be returned to Schiphol Airport, grilled and flown back to London before he could take possession, the owner was pardonably upset. Luckily he had some experience of British behaviour in this kind of situation, and sat patiently crumbling a roll.

Mindful of recent changes in newspaper ownership, older readers of *The Times* felt some alarm when an issue of the paper lately devoted space to a record kill of foxes in the Lake District, an air trip from Hongkong by a banded sea snake, measures to curb straying sheep in Derbyshire, a plague of starlings on Uxbridge Underground station, continued suspense at the Regent's Park home of Ivy, the polar bear, a nineteen-foot-long crocodile observed on the Semliki river, and an advertisement beginning "Horses need holidays." It is denied, however, from Printing House Square, that the paper is shortly selling out to *Animal Ways*.

2 2

"Mr. Dillnut, general sales manager of Champion Engineering, Toronto, says that two and a half years ago the sports car market was non-existent. Since then it has doubled."

Yorkshire Evening Post

Could get serious.

2 2

"By tight," said Mr. Harold Macmillan, Minister of Housing, the other day, "I mean the difference between three per cent too much and three per cent too little." Despite its lofty source, police surgeons aren't too sanguine about this new definition.

2 2

The British Medical Association's journal, *Family Doctor*, describes an experiment in shock treatment during which, in a roomful of volunteer patients, the light suddenly went out without warning, a revolver was



fired, a sheet of old iron crashed to the floor with a shattering noise, the backs of the chairs fell off, and the arms became electrified. In the old, pre-National Health Service days, of course, the treatment came free with the presentation of the doctor's bill.

6 6

For "Time", A Question Answered

"As the showpiece items in Britain's leading humor magazine, *Punch*'s cartoons are known the world over. But its punchless articles are scarcely noticed even in Britain."

Time Magazine

Well, thanks—

We like the Editor-in-Chief (Henry R. Luce), the Editorial Director (John Shaw Billings), the Editor (T. S. Matthews), the Managing Editor (Roy Alexander), the Executive Editor (Dana Tasker), the Assistant Managing Editor (Otto Fuerbringer), the Senior Editors (Robert W. Boyd Jr., Edward O. Cerf, Thomas Griffith, Henry Anatole Grunwald, Hillis Mills, John Osborne,

"We're always anxious to hear what you like . . . about *Time*. Since you can't drop in for a personal chat, we invite you to use the space below to tell us what you like most about *Time*."

Time, same issue

Content Peckham, Joseph Purtell, John Tibby, John Walker and Max Ways), the Associate Editors (Douglas Auchincloss, Louis Banks, Gilbert Cant, Alexander Eliot, Max Gissen, Frederick Gruin, Roger S. Hewlett, Louis Kronenberger, Jonathan Norton Leonard, Robert Manning, John T. McCullough, William Miller, Paul O'Neil, Margaret Quimby, Carl Solberg and Walter Stockly) and whichever of the thirty-nine Contributing Editors wrote the first part of the paragraph above, left.

6 6

"HUMOUR"

"Take this eight-shillings for the while," says young drunkard to a tiny legged woman. "Thank you—I will wish you my guest after the pleasure embroidery; but you don't come for it again," replied humbly to the donor. "Why! supposing I revise my plans wouldn't you give me it?" asked the young drunkard. "You must understand that it has been home for my meals she gui—oh gui," said the beast-like woman. The young man who was annoyed sent for a police, and the woman gave him the eight shillings and the young man went away scot free."—*Nigerian Daily Standard*

Sorry. Try a studio audience.



"Already my Government has succeeded in uniting Sudanese and Egyptians, who feel they are one people."—General Neguib

LOVE AND LAUGHTER

I DO not claim as the greatest, but I do claim as the most imaginative, story writer of the past sixty years the Man of Science, who used to narrate his adventures in the *Strand Magazine* of the 'nineties. Grant that he was no stylist. Grant that, like Homer, he was the work of collaborators. Grant that he only seems to have functioned as a stop-gap, when both Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes were absent on holiday. But what a mind! What dramatic power! And above all what an insight into the human soul!

He reached his *nadir*, I think, in the adventure of "The Man Who Smiled," which, owing to foul weather and influenza, and in a fit of perversity, I exhumed the other day.

"Partly to renew his experience," explains our author, "with certain tribes in the Central Provinces of India," he had booked a passage for Bombay on the P.N.O. steamer called the *Crocodile*. On board he met a newly-married couple who obviously shared some secret sorrow. They told him what it was. Not on their honeymoon, not in their courting days, but somewhat later had the wife discovered her husband's tragedy. When he smiled:

"Suddenly his whole face underwent a complete revolution—the mouth was stretched wide, and literally seemed to open from ear to ear, showing his glittering, white teeth. The short hair on the forehead was brought down until it reached the eyebrows, and at the same time, by some extraordinary spasm of muscle, the lower eyelids were everted, and the eyeballs rolled up until there was nothing visible but the whites."

When he laughed it was even worse:

"He gave a sort of chuckle, low and deep at first, and resembling to a certain extent the baying of a bloodhound; but as the laugh proceeded it rose in strength and sound until it at last resembled certain strings of the bass fiddle, played in absolute discord."

He gave an exhibition of this feat to the Man of Science, just to show how it went. But what made it more terrible was that he had a very keen sense of humour, so that the restraint he was obliged to practise almost drove him mad. Obviously the unfortunate fellow was born fifty years before his time. He would have been invaluable nowadays as a member of a studio audience at Broadcasting House. But there was no help for him in those staid years.

The young wife was broken-hearted, and the Man of Science tried to console her, reminding her that love triumphed over all. She did her best, but she broke down again on reaching Bombay, where another cataclysmic smile and another volcanic cachinnation unhappily occurred. And now the Man of Science came into his own. He took the husband away on a tiger-shooting expedition to Jubbulpore, and I think he must have had an inkling as to what would happen there. A man-eating tiger had devoured most of the



inhabitants of a native village, leaving behind the widow of one, whose name was Ranee Mee. The two Englishmen, protected by nothing but rifles and righteousness, went out to meet the destroyer. The tiger attacked, and was slain by the Man of Science after badly mauling the Man of Laughter, who had climbed an insufficient tree. It does not seem to have occurred to the latter to exercise on the enraged animal his peculiar gift, which, one might have thought, would have turned a mad elephant. Instead, he hovered on the brink of death for many days, in spite of the fact that Ranee Mee attempted to heal him with all the curious potions of the East. She had, however, reserved one remedy, and now at the last moment, when the disconsolate wife, repenting of her determination never to see her man again, arrived on the scene, the Indian handed to her a large hollow pearl, and told her to crush it and hold it to his nostrils. A "curious and volatile gas" escaped from it, and the patient smiled an ordinary smile. Thereafter he made a complete recovery.

"He laughs now as heartily and pleasantly as any man I know, and his smile is like sunshine."

Time of course has altered our relations with the great sub-continent, and it may well be that maniacal risibility will never again find so safe yet so ingenious a cure. I doubt whether penicillin would do it.

EVOE

Any Comment from Gerald, Kelly or Anyone?

"In inviting them to contribute to the cathedral's restoration the Dean and Chapter are following the example of their 19th-century predecessors who called in to assist them the leading artists of their day, including Dante, Gabriel, Rossetti and other members of the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood."

Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror

THE UNCOMMON COMMON MAN

IT was said of President Truman that he reminded every woman of her husband. Whether, electorally speaking, this was an advantage or not is a matter of opinion. Of Mr. Truman's successor, President Eisenhower, it might be said with equal truth that he reminds every woman of her husband's best friend—one of those genial companions who seem, in wifely eyes, more adventurous, more glamorous, than her own homely spouse, but who, at the same time, are sufficiently intimates of the household not to be open to the suspicion of leading simple-minded associates into reckless or licentious courses. A French subordinate of President Eisenhower's when he was at S.H.A.P.E. (incidentally, he held the General in great esteem) once remarked that he was the most uncommon common man he had ever encountered.

This is, perhaps, the secret of, or at any rate has considerable bearing on, his fabulous rise to fame and fortune. He can exercise authority without seeming to be superior, and can unbend without becoming familiar. In a drug store he evokes the White House, and vice versa. No faculty could be more propitious in the Century of the Common Man, which demands of those set in authority both the mystique of kingship and the vulgarity of demagogery at one and the same time. Louis XIV's claim *l'état c'est moi* seems decidedly modest by comparison with *le Peuple c'est moi*—the preposterous, but inescapable, assertion of those who demand allegiance in our time.

The American Presidency carries the proposition to its ultimate limit. Stalin, it is true, demands, and gets, adulation which would have brought a blush to the cheek of a Caliph of Baghdad, but he is not, like an American President, under the necessity of having to seem jovial and ordinary as well as fearful and superb. The public relations side of his responsibilities is taken care of by Beria and his political police. President Eisenhower, on the other hand, has to smile and smile whatever his mood, to shake hands until his fingers and forearm ache with exhaustion, to be always and everlastinglly Ike. Lincoln complained that the President is never alone. If this was true in Lincoln's time it is a thousand times more true to-day, when the printing press, the camera and the radio carry the Presidential image and utterance into every home. Indeed, it would not be difficult to imagine anthropologists in the remote future producing a new version of *The Golden Bough*, relating this time to the symbolization of Presidential, not Monarchical, authority. The process, they might well conclude, at last reached the point where a President in the flesh became unnecessary. An anonymous face which smiled, a hand capable of grasping other hands and a voice capable of pronouncing platitudes with conviction, would suffice.

If, however, President Eisenhower has been content, up to a point, to assume such a rôle, it would be the greatest possible error to deduce, as have some quite distinguished European observers of the American scene, that he is therefore an empty vessel. Most of these same observers, it is only fair to point out, were convinced in the first place that Governor Adlai Stevenson would easily defeat General Eisenhower in the Presidential election, and then, when the General was triumphantly elected, that he would prove the obedient tool of more astute, or at any rate experienced, Republican politicians like Senator Taft.

The fact that they have already been proved wrong on both these counts in no wise diminishes the certitude with which they continue to prognosticate about the forthcoming Eisenhower Presidency. Their misunderstanding is due, primarily, to the absurdly high value which is nowadays put on purely intellectual gifts and skills. Thus it was often remarked that Hitler was an ignoramus, and so was bound to come to grief. In the end, happily, he did come to grief, but not before he had displayed a remarkable, if odiously employed, talent for leadership. The only thing which shocked Shaw when he visited Russia was that (as emerged from a conversation he had with Stalin) the Soviet dictator had never heard of Cromwell. This lacuna in his academic equipment does not appear seriously to have impeded him in disposing of all possible rivals, and ruling Russia, as well as a world-wide Communist Party organization, with an iron hand for more than two decades. The illusion that Foreign Secretaries must be linguists, Prime Ministers expert geographers and Presidents of the Board of Trade well versed in economic theory has been frequently exploded, but nevertheless persists. In fact, the qualities required in those who exercise authority are rarely intellectual. Marcus Aurelius was notoriously an unsatisfactory Emperor, Confucius failed lamentably in some quite trivial assignments entrusted to him, as did also Machiavelli.

If, therefore, President Eisenhower has never displayed any tendency to become a Third Programme addict, or to settle down to *A la recherche du temps perdu*, this has no bearing on his suitability to be President of the United States and to exercise with patience, understanding and forbearance the immense world responsibilities which go therewith. Few would be inclined to call him a great general, but he won a great war, and if he displays in his statesmanship the same qualities of good sense, the same capacity to delegate and to command loyal and competent service, as he did in his generalship, his move to Pennsylvania Avenue will prove highly beneficial alike to his own countrymen and to all us others whom fate and history have conspired to associate with them.

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE



"IT'S ALL YOURS, IKE."



THAT doyen of sartorial good taste, the Editor of *The Tailor and Cutter*—himself appropriately named Mr. Taylor—rarely minces words about the outer garments of his fellow men. "This Coronation will be an affair of make-do, mend and lend," says he, speaking of nobility in general and of scarlet and ermine in particular.

While certain peers have been huffing at the Earl Marshal in their most dignified *Times*-correspondence language about an alleged ultimatum over their cherished places in the Abbey—a protest callously headlined by the *Daily Express* leader-writer as "Tantrums Among the Titled"—the cherished garments of the peerage are causing something less than a stir in the deft trade of which Mr. Taylor is the spokesman.

This was borne out during a visit made, on the advice of Mr. Taylor, to that august Savile Row showroom which not only looks like a part of the Reform Club but also sports a comfortably padded but seemingly *factice* weighing machine. In these effortlessly suave surroundings the news was broken to this reporter that the Establishment had not taken a single order for a new scarlet and ermine reach-me-down for this Coronation. Among the noble host having a nodding acquaintance with that Establishment, not one single peer intends to treat himself to a new outfit which, according to present calculations, might cost a mere trifle above £300—plus, of course, purchase tax.

The Establishment—benign to the point of allowing even a casual caller to toy with the royal coachman's massive gold brocade tunic which was in for alterations

—did not seem to be unduly ruffled by this particular recession in trade. "For the 1937 Coronation we took about a dozen orders. But in those days the cost was only about £170—and, of course, no purchase tax."

Delicate inquiries about the make-do-and-mend side of the business (there being clearly a good deal of scarlet and ermine about in that sartorial Reform) were rewarded with an engaging, if singularly useless, sidelight upon contemporary British noblemen. The Establishment finds that they are bigger all round than their predecessors. All the scarlet and ermine in the place is there to be *let out*.

Supplementary questions about letting out in the other sense of borrowing or hiring were less well-received. The Establishment began to demonstrate that old-world talent for looking straight through casual callers. There were the politest of hints that this was Savile Row, where garments are made—or at worst altered. Somewhere east of Regent Street, perhaps, there might be places where a traffic in lend-lease, or whatever it was gentlemen felt obliged to do . . .

A telephone call to one such Place, not unknown to wedding-guests, revealed the fact that there has already been something of a blue-blooded run on these universal providers. They were out of scarlet and ermine. Their first orders for the finery came in just after the late King's death and the last of the outfits were snapped up some four or five months ago. Had they been able to accommodate a casual order at this moment, they estimated that it might run to about twelve guineas—which seems reasonable enough compared with the twenty-five guineas hiring fee sometimes quoted in the Press.

Meanwhile, in the personal columns of *The Times* the scarlet and ermine market has been fairly brisk. In the last six weeks there have been nine specific advertisements. Their intentions were varied. *Noblesse oblige* was nobly expressed by the baron who stated that he would gladly lend his Coronation robes to a young peer. The biggest figure mentioned in terms of cash was the oddly exact sum of £395 for the once-worn robes of a baron and baroness—with coronets thrown in. Runners-up were the "first class quality" robes and coronets for the same rank at "£200 or near offer." If the controversial so-called "ultimatum" of the Earl Marshal leaves a large number of peers without seats





in the Abbey, it looks as if the personal columns may become the vehicle for a dignified, if somewhat hasty, re-orientation in this particular market.

While the January snow was lying in Berkeley Square a singular event took place hard by in Bruton Street, beneath the puce-coloured lamp-shades of a famous dress house. This was the exhibition of a baron's robe, modelled for the benefit of the Press photographers by a young gentleman who showed admirable self-possession in this somewhat unlikely situation; and the purpose of this display, held by arrangement with the Earl Marshal himself, was to set off a Cap of State which may be worn by noblemen who do not possess coronets. A suggestion that this head-gear was "utility" met with the raised eyebrows it deserved, for, in fact, such a Cap of State is a reversion to the good old days before the coronation of King James II.

In the non-technical mind a certain amount of curiosity was naturally aroused by the fact that the garment in Bruton Street, unlike the domestic dressing gown, carried no pockets. What then do our betters wear beneath their scarlet on the Great Day, bearing in mind the need to carry a snack—or, indeed, a box of matches, in case the opportunity should arise for a surreptitious smoke.

Actually, the possibilities in "undergarments" and accoutrements are endless and impressive. Though the average peer, however frail, is already burdened with six pounds' weight of scarlet and ermine, it is amazing what an endowment of pockets, in what a variety of costume, he may carry beneath—according to his qualifications.

Those in court dress or uniform may, for instance, go to the Abbey armed. Some, it seems, may well go armed to the teeth. Those wearing certain Highland outfits, Savile Row says, may take a claymore as well as a brace of ornamental pistols and perhaps a dirk. Peers unable (or not qualified) to muster the uniforms that sort with such equipment, are let off with full evening dress (knee breeches optional). No need, then, to worry about pockets, pouches and the like. The lords are amply provided: and it is a matter of noble common sense to go amply provisioned.

JOHN PUDNEY

DELIRIUM AT THE ADVERTISING AGENCY

"CARRUTHERS!" the Chief Copy-writer cried,
"From Christmas, Strawjoys Breakfast Bran
will sell

New Strawjoy Brekkiflake: emulsified;
Chlorophyl-treated; cannot stain or smell;

Free from unpleasant after-taste—in fact
Free from all taste, and warranted to contain
Vitamins A to W; vacuum-packed.

Carruthers, you shall think of a Campaign.

Make it a wow: 'New Brekkiflake is Best'
And think of something catchy: 'Family-fit.'
Spectacular. Rhapsodie. I suggest
A new-word angle—stuff like 'Flavourite.'

Flavourite! Something snapped; my brain began
Neologizing wildly; *Finnegan's Wake*
Fell lengths behind; the Jabberwock also ran.
A new *Thesaurus* trumpets Brekkiflake:

"Pile up your plate with New Breakfascination,
Chewperlative Crisperfect Yumtiousness
Yummarvellously Yours with this Stunsation—
Buy Brekkiflake Fee-fi-fo-fumtiousness!

Eat Blissfast this Ecstatimasticating
Superlatasta Scrumperlicious way;
Try this Tastingling Appetitillating
Droolicious Slaver-Flavour Flake to-day!"

And frenzy split my nib: the golden moon,
The stars and comets of my rhapsody,
Hid from the sun of sober afternoon.
(They finally used "It's Brekkiflake For Me.")



"We wondered if you'd change it
for one that likes the television."



"Just a doodle. It only blows hot air out of the back."

THIS IS A STICK-UP

I DON'T know what Miss Whibley will say.

It seemed so simple at the time. The chairman read from the agenda, "Pistol for Act Three," and I said, with ballistics written all over me and the confidence of a man who passes a gun-shop daily, "I'll fix that," and we went on to discuss dropping the prompter from the programmes. It appeared as "promoter" last year and caused some bad feeling.

But nothing like the bad feeling I'm going to cause Miss Whibley.

The London gunshop showed me the very thing. The cost of hire was absurdly low, the blank ammunition ridiculously cheap. Already I felt the glow that rewards a man who has said he'll do something and done it. "Excellent," I said, putting the weapon in my brief-case. "I'll take it."

The man reached over and took it out again, then went back to

blowing down a Spanish musket. "Not without a certificate," he said — "Firearms Act, 1937."

"Oh," I said.

"Call back any time," said the man, dropping the pistol in a drawer. "With the certificate."

In the light of this I had left things a bit late. The production was four days away, and they asked me about the gun at rehearsal that night. When I made my entrance and said "Move and you're a dead duck. Bang!" Miss Whibley, instead of crumpling to the floor as usual, said that it was time we rehearsed with a real shot, otherwise I should be saying "Bang!" on the night. "I'm getting it," I said. Miss Whibley said "There's not much time." I said "It'll be here," and she said she should hope so, and the producer said "All right, she crumples to the floor."

Luckily the police station and the railway station are conveniently

juxtaposed at Hayheath. I started five minutes early on the next morning and popped in, saying briskly as I entered, "Firearms Act, 1937," hoping thus to suggest some slight immediacy.

The constable questioned me closely, as is proper in these violent times. The weapon was for use on the stage? In an amateur dramatic production? Only on the stage? To fire blank cartridges? Would I use it personally? Would anyone use it but me? Where was the weapon coming from? How long should I have it? Had I a licence already? Had I any ammunition in my possession? How much should I want? Was there any——?

But in the end I passed with flying colours, and the constable gave me a pink form which, I saw from a quick glance, would need completing in surroundings of contemplative ease.

"I'll bring it in to-night," I said,

and dashed off. I had heard three trains draw out already.

An older constable was on duty in the evening. He knew nothing of my case, but heard me out patiently, tapping the pink form with his notebook. He was surprised when I confirmed that I was not already a holder of a firearm certificate, as the form I had spent most of the day completing was, in fact, an application for a renewal, and in the circumstances entirely meaningless. "Come to think of it," the constable said, drawing up a stool to a shelf of reference books and making himself comfortable—"you've raised quite a few queries here."

Time passed. The constable got down and stretched his legs. He came and leaned on the counter. "As a matter of fact," he said, "you don't want a certificate at all." He turned away and began taking down particulars of a lost dog from an elderly lady in musquash.

"But," I said, bursting in rudely, "I can't get the gun without one."

"Name and address on his collar?" he said to the lady. And to me: "What you want is a Letter of Authorization from the Chief Constable. You'll have to fill up another form."

This, when I got it, seemed very much like the other one, but the paper was a different colour. I took it away. I was late for rehearsal.

It was the first constable again next morning. Neither of us mentioned that the form I now brought in wasn't the one he'd given me. It seemed better to let it slide.

"I shall want to collect the gun to-morrow," I said. "We shall have to manage to-night's dress rehearsal without it. But to-morrow . . ." I tailed off persuasively.

"To-morrow, eh?" said the constable, and shook his head. Then he went into the next room and conferred with two other men. He rang up several people, and looked up a few books on the shelf.

"Call to-morrow," he said, and smiled reassuringly.

It seemed too good to be true.

At the dress rehearsal I shot Miss Whibley with my old briar pipe. "Bang!" I cried. She gave me a terrible look as she fell.

TO THE INEVITABLE OPTIMIST

THESE days I feel like a man on a cold dawn deck,
With Mr. Masefield's wind like a whetted knife
Sliding between my muffler and my neck
And cutting short my expectation of life.
At night, in bed, I feel a trifle stronger—
Don't tell me that the days are getting longer.



It was the sergeant on duty next morning. He heard my story in full, which took some time by now. He threw in a shrewd question here and there about the purpose for which the weapon was required, whether I already held a certificate and so forth. At last he said "Well, sir, that all seems in order. Suppose you call in, say, Monday of next week."

Monday of next week.

"Look," I said. And I told him. About Miss Whibley—everything. I must have been powerfully moving because in the end he came out with a suggestion surely unparalleled in the annals of officialdom. It was irregular, he said, and he wasn't at all sure he ought to do it, he said, but if I cared to tell the gun-shop to give him a ring he would get through to headquarters in the meantime and confirm that my letter of authority, though not produceable, did in fact exist. "Sergeant," I said, "I—you—" I broke down, I think.

The man at the gun-shop was screwing a hammer on a blunderbuss when I broke in on him with the glad news. He went on screwing it. His authority to release firearms, he said, came from the Metropolitan Police at Scotland Yard. Where they got *theirs* from was no concern of his. All he knew was that if all the station sergeants in Sussex called on him in deputation on their bended knees it wouldn't make a ha'porth of difference. He was sorry. Of course, if I'd like to ring up Scotland Yard—but he'd tell me now, I shouldn't get any change out of *them*. It was the Firearms Act, 1937, that was the trouble. If they—

Scotland Yard is a big place. Rather departmentalized, you might say. In my state, perhaps, it was a good thing. It passed a long afternoon.

It struck me, as I crept into the Memorial Hall this evening at the end of Act Two and began to put on the grease-paint, that I ought perhaps to have tried the Home Secretary. But I was tired, tired. You can only do so much. Now, my muffler knotted and my cap pulled well down, I have barely the energy to scribble this brief account—my vindication, in a way—on the back of a few spare programmes. Act Three is already under way. I have had my "Five minutes please" from Mrs. Tailyew, the call-boy. I can do no more now but make my entrance on cue, through the property window.

"Move and you're a dead duck!" I shall cry. I shall not cry "Bang!" but I shall bring down, with cruel precision, my silk evening sock full of sago.

I don't know what Miss Whibley will say. J. B. BOOTHROYD



STRIP-TEASE

HOW do men who clean Old Masters ever make themselves stop in time when it gives such a wonderful sense of power to strip off layers of dingy covering and reveal the long-hidden treasures beneath? I know the temptations; I have been an addict myself.

I once found a blackened portrait hanging in an upper room. Through the cracked, bituminous surface I could dimly make out a ruff, a lettered scroll and a lobster. My wife was evasive when I questioned her. Both sides of the family drew back from my queries. If it was an ancestor the secret was going to be kept from me. The craving to find out the hidden truth gnawed at my vitals. Every day I would stand before the picture, gazing baffled into its murky depths. For a couple of weeks I allowed myself to do no more than scratch until my finger-nail was filled with hard, dark paint; but when I uncovered a small cloud just above the lobster's claw I could restrain myself no longer.

Late at night, while my wife was a-snore on the great double bed, I crept along the passage, to the moonlit wall, and set to work on the top left-hand corner of the picture with muffled pumice-stone. Only the bats responded to the squeaking as I grated away the thick, opaque varnish and revealed a round, red spot. Apparently the picture had, at some time, been sold, and feeling that its value was already enhanced I deliberately broke off the orgy and returned to bed.

All next day my mouth was dry with the fever of impatience; but I knew I must wring out the last flavours from expectancy. As soon as bedtime came I was back before the portrait. With trembling hands I applied hammer to chisel and soon had flaked off a large piece that had rendered the lettering on the scroll illegible. It was now revealed as "Clericus clericus lupus," clearly the motto of one who had taken an active part in ecclesiastical politics. Encouraged yet fearful, I struck again and a particularly dark patch crumbled into powder and disclosed an aquiline nose. Prolonging the delicious agony, I downed tools and hurried away to my room, turning over in my mind the rival merits of emery paper and spirits of salt.

Soon self-discipline succumbed to the violence of desire and I was spending whole nights with turpentine, vinegar, file and strigil. I knew that cleaners did not hurl themselves upon their prey and drive through to the end. They dabbed and hesitated and finicked. Whenever I was tempted to slosh a bucket of solvent over all, I reminded myself that curiosity must linger. It was only slowly that the lobster was joined by a conch, a hare and a guitar.

One day, amid a litter of exploded enthusiasms and deflated hobbies in the cellar, I found a jar of hypo. I remember hearing this spoken of as a prime developer of the latent, and clutching it I ran up to the portrait and applied it liberally. The whole surface of the composition seemed to fuzz and waver and

reorganize. In the bottom right-hand corner two signatures appeared, "Pictor Ignotus" and "Berenson." The lettering on the scroll now read "Doune wi' Claverhoose." Towards the base of the minaret was increasingly adumbrated a hairy ear.

"My man, what mischief do you brew in the Blue Dormitory?" my wife would ask me as, ashen with fatigue yet glittering with fever, I would glide past her, carrying a jar of caustic or a plane. Determined that on her birthday I would surprise her with a picture radiantly bright and hitherto unseen by human eye, I would give the curt nod of one who does not throw secrets in the bowls of beggars, and lop up towards the still unrevealed mysteries of the canvas.

One day, led by a flash of insight, I removed the portrait from its frame. Held sideways in a strong light, it showed several layers, and with a needle I tried to separate these out in a pilot experiment. This was not successful. More to the point was the device of sticking on strips of gummed tape and then pulling. This brought to light much of a horse and a shaggy sort of hat up into which the beard grew strongly. The lobster, now a bit dwarfed by its environment, reverted from red to black.

As far as I could see there were six layers of paint and, judging by the subject-matter so far uncovered, getting on for six pictures. My theory was strengthened by the emergence, from a particularly black patch, of a diagram. I knew that soon I must slow down the rate of my work if I were to present my mate with a variegated and completely representative surface. Yet the itch to carry on nagged at me continually. The night before my wife's birthday I wrestled long with myself. I stood before the canvas, using only my smallest file, touching up here and there but making no attack on the central problem, a kind of dark-brown blister that rose from the lower edge and was the only example left of the latest period.

Suddenly a red glare blazed in my mind. Ceasing to be uxorious, to care about the disappointment I should be causing, I filled the nearest bath with solvents and laid the canvas in it. For a moment nothing happened. Then a second horse appeared with some minor Greek deity riding it. A large wharf with a bustling air was seen to support the minaret and the scroll got much longer and less grammatical. There was a glimpse of the Duke of Cumberland. The waters muddled as the canvas gave up its final secret.

The piece of material that remained was bone-white and bare; I presented it to my wife with some embroidery silks and the suggestion that it might amuse her to turn it into tapestry. I think from her expression it was not the right kind of canvas or perhaps she objected to the strong smell of sulphuric acid, resin and turps that rose from it. She is an inscrutable woman, as more than one pollster has found to his no small cost.

R. G. G. PRICE



"PRIVILEGE!"

DEAR SIR HAROLD WEBBE,
May we shyly address you as the respected Member for the Cities of London and Westminster—our Member—on the tricky theme of Parliamentary "privilege," which we believe you may be discussing when you meet again.

We hope you will not say, sir: "But that has nothing to do with a mere constituent." For that will raise at once the question: Whence do Parliamentary privileges flow—those "private laws" and peculiar liberties which put both Houses and, sometimes, their individual members above the ordinary public law of the land? The Lords, we read, have ever enjoyed them, simply because they have place and voice in Parliament; but a practice has obtained with the Commons which would appear to submit their privileges to "the royal favour." At the beginning of every Parliament since Henry VIII, the Speaker, for the Commons, has laid claim, by humble petition, to their ancient and undoubted rights and privileges. The Lord Chancellor replies that "Her Majesty most readily confirms all the rights and privileges which have ever been granted to or conferred upon the Commons by Her Majesty or any of her royal predecessors." The Speaker then reports to the Commons that "their privileges have been confirmed in as full and ample a manner as they have heretofore been granted or allowed."

"But," says Erskine May, "the privileges of the Commons are nevertheless independent of the Crown and are enjoyed irrespectively of their petition. Some have been confirmed by statute, and are therefore beyond control either of the Crown or any other power but Parliament: while others, having been limited or even abolished by statute, cannot be 'granted or allowed,' by the Crown." In these days, after all, the Commons would be the first to complain if the Crown claimed a right to suspend or alter the laws. The customary petition,

in fact, is graceful but out of date: and the Lords do very well without it.

Some privileges rest firmly on a decision of the courts. For example, until the case of *Ex parte Herbert: Rex v. Sir Rollo Graham Campbell*, high legal lights in the Commons were uneasily dubious whether it was really lawful to sell "drink" (a) without a licence and (b) outside "permitted hours." In the last century the Kitchen Committee themselves presented a Bill to legalize what they were doing. But in 1935 the High Court decided that the Licensing Acts were "not applicable" to the House of Commons, not because it met in a Royal Palace but because it was the House of Commons.

Some, as you know, sir, rest on Statute, like the right of free speech, some on the *lex et consuetudo* of Parliament, like the right to commit for contempt. Some, like the right of free speech, will probably endure as long as Parliament: others have dwindled and died. In the rough old days not only Members but their servants enjoyed freedom from arrest in civil law-suits: for a Member must not be deprived of his escort to the House simply because the silly fellow was in debt. Servants are immune no more (and Members not so much).

Why the difference? Because Parliamentary privilege, being of British origin, is a severely practical affair. The point of it is not flattery but efficiency. As May puts it, the collective privileges "are necessary for the support of the authority and the proper exercise of the functions of both Houses," the individual privileges "to protect the persons and secure the independence and dignity" of Members. Lord Denman in *Stockdale v. Hansard*, Lord Hewart in the Kitchen Committee case, said: "All the privileges that can be required for the energetic discharge of the duties inherent in that high trust are conceded without a murmur or a doubt." Privilege, in short, is not to make you feel good but to enable you to do good.

That is why we—there, sir, it has slipped out at last—why We, the People, permit you to say anything you like about us in the Chamber and then to print and circulate it in the Official Report. Sometimes, not often, this privilege is abused; sometimes your colleagues make a mistake: but, on the whole, we feel that you should be able to say what you think without fear or favour, though we have no remedy if you malign and injure us.

When you appear at the bottom of Parliament Street the policemen stop the traffic for you. Again there is no "murmur or doubt." The motorist may not like you or your politics, but he is glad to help you to do your job, to be in time for vote or question or speech.

When it was declared by the High Court that the Licensing Laws could be ignored in the very building where they were born, there was hardly a murmur anywhere. In that odd but important place, we said, with such odd hours of labour, you should be allowed odd hours of refreshment. Efficiency again, no more.

But, sir—this is an imaginative, impossible picture, clumsily drawn to illustrate an argument—suppose that we heard of drunken midnight orgies in the House of Commons: suppose that instead of walking smartly across the road to their place of duty the Members loitered, gossiped, took snuff, and sneered at the waiting citizens: suppose that Members continually and malignantly said untrue things about someone they disliked outside, there would be trouble—and you, sir, we are sure, would be delighted. Almost any "privilege" takes something from those who are bound by the public law. We are delayed and you are not: you can drink when you like and we can not: you can say what you like about us and we cannot reply. If there were any real abuse of privilege, neither the Crown nor dear old *lex et consuetudo*, not even the Statute Book itself, could save it. Either through the Courts, or the Press, or, more likely, the good sense of Parliament, obedient to public opinion (which is the usual way), that particular privilege would be reduced

or die. All this is a rather wordy way, sir, of saying that we, the Fathers and Mothers of Privilege, have a right to address you, respectfully, upon this subject.

We have, sir, no complaints or fears about your own behaviour. But we have noticed, among some of the newer Members, a tendency to strut, the tiniest trend towards super self-importance. A man is rightly proud to be a Member of Parliament. It is without doubt an exciting thing to have the traffic stopped for him at the approaches to Westminster: but he may too easily begin to think that the traffic should stop for him everywhere. "Privilege," like champagne, goes to the head: and those least accustomed to it become intoxicated first. Those who, outside, were hottest against wealth and privilege cry "Privilege!" in the House if a wasp approaches them, or someone says, softly, "I do not agree."

Now, sir, one of the few clear, unqualified assertions in 75 pages of Erskine May is this:

"It is agreed that no new privilege can be created. In 1704, the Lords communicated a resolution to the Commons at a conference: 'That neither House of Parliament have power by any vote or declaration to create to themselves new privileges, not warranted by the known laws and customs of Parliament'—and this was assented to by the Commons.

An attempt is afoot, we have heard, sir, to create a new privilege—new, at least, since 1704. The matter is too deep and difficult for us; but if any such effort be made we hope that you will stand against it.

Trouble of this sort was foreseen long ago by Erskine May: "Thus far the course adopted by the house" (small h, you notice?) "has led, for the present, to a fortunate termination of its contests with the courts of law: but it must be acknowledged that the position of privilege is unsatisfactory. Assertions of privilege are made in Parliament and denied in the courts: the officers who execute the orders of Parliament are liable to vexatious actions: and if verdicts are obtained by them the damages

and costs are paid by the Treasury. The parties who bring such actions, instead of being prevented from proceeding with them by some legal process acknowledged by the courts, can only be coerced by an unpopular exercise of privilege which does not stop the actions.

"A remedy has already been applied to actions connected with the printing of Parliamentary papers (the Parliamentary Papers Act, 1840); and a well-considered statute, founded upon the same principle, is the only mode by which collision between Parliament and the courts of law can be prevented for the future."

Sir, has such a statute ever been considered? If not, might it not be

worthy of the consideration of our respected Member? Privilege has become a sort of sacred mystery: it should surely be a clear and undisputed code.

We are, sir, your obedient, but not too obedient, servants

Mr. PUNCH (and the dog TOBY).

A. P. H.

2 2

"The procedure is that penitents come forward, and sheep is killed. They confess to having taken the Mau Mau oath and, having eaten a sheep's eye, renounce and denounce the oath.

No Kikuyu dare undergo these rites with his tongue in his cheek."

The Times

One sees the difficulty.



"Faster, faster! — it's nearly gone."

The Best Years of My Wife

AFTER a long silence my popsie said "Why don't you talk to me? You're not doing anything."

"I'm thinking," I said.

"What are you thinking?"

"I don't know."

"Why don't you know?"

"I haven't thought about that," I said. After a few seconds I added: "I had a thought just now."

"What was it?"

"I wondered if I had any faults."

My popsie was startled. "Do you mean you don't *know*?"

I became more modest. "What I meant," I continued, "is that I wondered if, after three years, you are still happy with me?"

"Of course I am."

"You sound doubtful."

"No," said my popsie. "I'm just thinking."

"What are you thinking?"

"Well," said my popsie, "now that you've given me the opportunity to mention them, you have a few curious habits."

"Oh?" I said.

"For instance," said my popsie, "when somebody comes to tea you shouldn't stand there and say 'Do you want a clean table-cloth on?' Have it ready in the drawer so that people think, for a little while anyway, that that's how we live."

"It was only Jean and Derek," I said.

"I thought you *liked* Jean and Derek."

"Yes," I said. "That's what I meant. It seemed to me at the time

that it was better to put on a table-cloth with a small porridge stain than a clean one. As a matter of fact," I explained, "Jean and Derek gave us the cloth I used. It seemed to me—"

"Yes," said my popsie. "Let's not have the whole permutation. Another thing I couldn't understand was when, after three weeks of almost complete silence, you decided to talk for an entire afternoon about Moroccan politics."

"Don't you like hearing about Moroccan politics?"

"No," said my popsie. "As a matter of fact I don't. What I like to hear is that you—"

"Then why," I asked, "didn't you stop me?"

"You seemed so happy," said my popsie. "I like you to be happy. Besides, I kept thinking that you couldn't keep talking about Moroccan politics for more than another two minutes." She paused. "Do you want me to go on with this?"

"Of course!" I said. "You may never have another opportunity."

"Well," said my popsie, nervously, "I did wonder why you found it necessary, when buying a pair of gloves, to say 'Whacko! Press on regardless.' What on earth does it mean?"

"I don't believe it," I protested. "I would never say such a thing when buying gloves."

"I wouldn't have minded if you'd said it quietly," said my popsie, "but you roared it."

"To whom—at whom did I roar?"

"The man who sold you the gloves," said my popsie. "I don't know his name. He had a moustache."

"Ah!" I said. "He had a moustache."

"Does that make a difference?"

"All the difference in the world."

"Well, for goodness' sake get your gloves from a bare-faced robber," said my popsie. "I had to pretend I was waiting for someone else."

"I'm sorry," I said. "It was because the gentleman had been a member of Coastal Command. In those long flights over the Atlantic something had to be found to keep the face warm—"

"Nevertheless," said my popsie, "moustache or not, I don't see any cause nine years later to shout 'Whacko! Press on regardless.'"

"I have no memory of doing it," I said. "Did he give any reply?"

"Yes," said my popsie. "He said 'We've got a nice line in woollen scarves.'" She saw my baffled expression. "Don't be fed up. Perhaps he was in the cavalry. Listen! You tell me about *my* faults."

"You haven't any."

"Surely one or two?"

"No," I said.

"Not after three years?"

"No."

"I don't believe you," said my popsie.

"Well," I said slowly, "there's the frowning . . ."

"Frowning?" said my popsie, frowning severely. "What do you mean? Don't you like my forehead?"

"Yes," I said. "I wish I had one too. Only I don't see why, if you're happy, you have to frown."

"I can't help it," said my popsie. "My mother says I did it soon after I was born. She does it too, but you've never criticized *her*. I know what it is. You don't think I'm as attractive as I was. You *used* to say I was perfect. Now I'm twenty-four and *old*, and you only say 'What's for tea?' and things like that . . ."

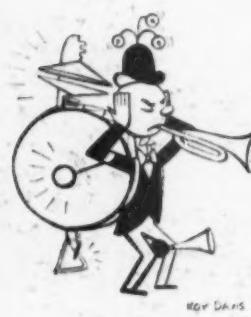
It took four hours to settle it all.

ε ε

"I'm interested to find that although we speak the same language we don't mean the same thing with many of our words. And most of our girls over here now use words the American way."

What Americans call cookies we call biscuits, and what we call biscuits they call cookies."—*The People*

Quite a coincidence.



THEY BUILT SHIPS

NIGH the mouldering staithes
Where the lads come to bathe,
And the tidal river as it passes
Licks with salty lips
The wiry grasses
Where the cattle graze,
There, in the old days,
They built ships . . .

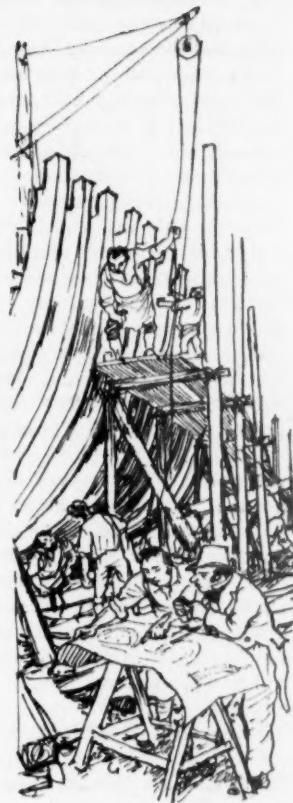
Staunch little ships they built here,
Craft with coastwise rigs,
Schooners, ketches, brigs,
That sailed many a year
With their homely freights—
Cornish clay, granite, Bethesda slates—
To and fro between Fowey and Falmouth,
Runcorn, and Wales,
Dipping both rails under in the Channel gales,
Beating up to wind'ard with the sunlight on
their sails . . .

There were bustle and noise then,
Voices of boys and men,
And the clean shipyard smells
Of sawdust, paint and tar;
You could hear from far
Late and soon
The anvil's clang,
And the caulkers' mallets as they rang
All in time and tune,
Like a peal of bells . . .

But now it's ended and done;
Thirty years agone
The last ship left the ways,
With her new bunting flying,
And the gulls crying
All round her, and the folk cheering from the
riverside
To see her take her tide . . .

And by the rotting staithes,
Where the lads come to bathe,
No stir of life is seen
And over the old slips
Where they used to build ships
The grass grows green . . .

C. FOX SMITH



THE hot-water system has gone wrong, the man in blue overalls says, and he ought to know, in those overalls. He has the dials and the spanners, down in the boiler room, and the facts are at his fingertips, although of course it is we upstairs in the offices who are actually warmed by the system. He doesn't need a system to warm him; he can fix up forty ways of warming himself, with his wheels and his levers, his atomic pile and his union card, down there in the boiler room, or he can just keep moving, or keep drinking cups of hot tea. The system gives him no pleasure at all, and if one of the dials shows a wrong figure, as he says it does at present, then he simply shuts off the whole thing and lets it cool down and goes out and has eight cups of hot tea. It doesn't seem to us, the occupants of the offices, in the least important what figures the dials show, but to the boiler man it is a vital question. He must have all the figures just so before he lets us have any heat. His conscience wouldn't let him allow us to be nice and warm up here with the wrong figures showing down there. It wouldn't be right.

That's how it works the world over. The man who wears the overalls doesn't need the system.

THE MAN IN BLUE OVERALLS

He has gone out into the general office now to explain it all to them, announcing the latest dial readings in a cheerful, newsvendor's voice, drawing rough diagrams on our expensive headed notepaper, and in general doing about as much damage as a burst boiler. He has become very good at this performance, and everybody enjoys it; I can hear a buzz of interested conversation and good-humoured leg-pulling. The boiler man is quite a popular figure; he doesn't keep them warm but he keeps them away from work. Everybody likes him, but I don't like him and I don't like his dials.

I have seen the dials down in the boiler room, because I went down there once, when they wouldn't show the proper figures, to get a cup of hot tea. The boiler man was busy at a bench, hammering something. "What are all these dials for?" I asked him. He looked up. "To show you the figures," he said shortly. "What figures?" I asked. He began hammering again. "To see if the wheels are adjusted right," he said. He has got dozens of wheels down there too. "And what are they for?" I asked. "They're

for adjusting the dials," he said grimly, hammering away.

"Right," I said (I know when I am beaten), "but what do the dials actually show? What do you call it?"

"The umpadocles gath rating," he said. That's what he said, I swear it. He doesn't know, any more than I do.

"Well, what do the figures mean?" I asked. "Seventy what? Eighty what?"

"Pounds per square inch," he said.

Do you believe that? I don't believe it.

I am going to get the boiler man, though, one of these days; I am going to have him up here in my office, when the boiler has been turned off, and explain the P.A.Y.E. system to him. There is always something wrong with his P.A.Y.E. and he always wants to have the system explained to him; or he thinks he does. It will take a long time and I shall bring the umpadocles gath rating into it, because that is part of income tax as well as boilers, although a lot of people don't know it. I wish I could get some dials involved in it too, but I haven't thought how to do that yet; however, in the right hands the tax tables will probably show a wrong figure just as readily. At any rate he will be with me, as the room gets colder and colder; he will sit in the same draught I sit in and think the same frozen thoughts—and he has been softened by years of hot tea and moving briskly about. It may not be as sweet as revenge, but it is equality. After all, why should the office staff get all the 'flu?



"And if I see anyone putting less than one hundred per cent into the tackle, I shall know where to find my Ophelia for the Drama Festival."

SUBJECTIVE STANZAS

"I just can't help it," said the norm,
"that I have always to conform.
I know it does seem very formal
but if I don't, I don't feel normal."



COMMERCIAL radio and television are great sticklers for sending Christmas and New Year greetings to their audience. No self-respecting face cream, no liver pill or hair rinse* or bunion plaster would dream of ending a broadcast in the holiday season without expressing to each and every listener—"personally" and "sin-

"cerely" are popular words in these mass salutations—the company's affectionate and heartfelt hopes for his success, happiness, etc., etc. If the president of the sponsoring company is known to be the sort who will fall for it, the script is likely to include, also, an extra-special personal statement from him along the same lines, mentioning him by name. (He is fishing off the Florida coast, and the script was completed in early November, but he does have a nasty habit of listening-in on every program.) The greetings often take a deeply religious turn, with patriotic overtones. Stilled is the gunfire of the crime show; the giveaway program has just bestowed its ultimate refrigerator—in this case on a woman in Fort Worth, Texas, for not being able to answer the question "How many years in a century?"—and a hush descends on all channels throughout the land. If it is the week before Christmas, sacred music is heard, possibly a majestic chorale, or the producer may prefer Humperdinck or the Nutcracker Suite. The music fades and gives way to the more than

*Dye

AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

usually sincere voice of the announcer. "And now——" he begins, "instead of the commercial announcement usually heard at this time, the makers of MUL . . ." He manages to make it sound like a staggering feat of self-abnegation on the part of the makers of MUL, their decision to blow good money on network time in order to extend the season's greetings. ". . . the makers of MUL, and the 2,000 employees who work in MUL's sunlit factory in Spik-'n-Span Town . . . personally . . . sincerely . . . also personal greetings from Howard K. Stuffingham, president of The MUL Corporation . . . each and every one of you sincerely . . ." And finally, says the announcer, these sentiments are shared not only by the friendly MUL dealers in neighborhood stores

everywhere, but by himself, too. He hopes that he will be permitted, as their old friend, to extend his . . . each and every . . . personal . . . sincere . . . good will . . . rejoicing . . . The music swells into a climax, and the MUL Show comes to an end.

A compact view of the typical Christmas program can be gained from the first two paragraphs of a review in *Variety*, the theater weekly, of the Tasty Kake Christmas Hour. This was a radio and television program from Philadelphia, and *Variety* reported:

"Local baking firm provided an important 'first' with a 'Quaker Network' simulcast by Philadelphia Orchestra, Eleanor Steber, two narrators (Milton Cross and Vera Zorina) and two choral groups (Temple University and St. Peter's Boys Choir). Sponsor was generously supplied with a baker's dozen of plugs for Tasty Kake and Tasty Pie. Less palatable was coupling of synth with firm as 'two Philadelphia institutions with highest standards.'

"Program was geared to season and included carols, excerpts from 'Nutcracker Suite,' 'Peter and the Wolf' and 'Messiah.' Miss Zorina did the narrating for 'Peter and the Wolf' and also gave a

reading from the 'Night Before Christmas.' Zorina accent, while okay for Prokofieff work, was noticeable in poem. Cross did commercials and read the Nativity verses from the Bible. Eleanor Steber came to forefront to sing carols 'O Holy Night,' 'The Lord's Prayer' with the Orchestra and Temple choristers and the passages from Handel's 'Messiah.'"

The small son of one Philadelphia listener watched the program stoically, but he brightened when the orchestra came to a passage in the Nutcracker Suite that he found familiar. "I know that!" he exclaimed. "That's the theme song from Pinhead!" (a television program for children).

This sort of thing is repeated, with variations, at half-hour intervals throughout the holiday season. It became a shade too much on December 21st for George S. Kaufman, the playwright, who had long been a panel member on a frivolous television program called *This is Show Business*, sponsored by the American Tobacco Company. "Let's make this one program," suggested Mr. Kaufman, "on which no one sings 'Silent Night.'" In the flurry of complaints that followed, Mr. Kaufman's statement was quickly excised from film recordings of the program which were made for later broadcasts, and although he explained that he had spoken out merely against the use of the Christmas carol in connection with the sale of commercial products Mr. Kaufman was promptly fired from *This is Show Business*. His utterance, it was held, had been "in questionable taste."

* * * * *

A hat manufacturer held a contest recently in which college students were invited to write radio commercials about his hats. Nine of the ten prize-winners addressed themselves to orthodox arguments in behalf of hats and hat wearing. They appeared to have boned up rather seriously on the manufacturer's "new Aridex water-repellent process" and the proposition "that a hat adds that extra 'something'" to the



college man's appearance, as indeed almost any visible item of wearing apparel is bound to do. But one of the contestants decided to pitch his appeal in jive-talk, sometimes known as bop-talk, and he won a \$50 prize for this one:

"Man, you ever been stoned? I wast! Bit the dust just to-day. Flipped when I dug those gone new Lee Creations. Some of those high-brow squares have been trying to gag us with those goofy bonnets for a long session, but the gone sidemen at the Lee chapeau company have really cut loose with four ultra-special head covers. Whether you move like a hipster or a long-haired square, these head warmers are the most. Man . . . no matter if you're cutting around campus or footin' it down to neon sign town, those crazy chapeaus are a gone, cool creation. Get on the beat, cat, and

dig the motto . . . 'Leap to your Lulu in a Lee lid.'

The only word in this jargon which seems likely to achieve wider acceptance is "square," a noun meaning one who is not hep, an outsider, a stupe. As a fast word with derisive implications, square already enjoys some currency, but the rest of the lingo is probably too arbitrary to endure. For those who would like to introduce a bit of jive talk into their language, here are a few definitions:

stoned—drunk, but in this context closely synonymous with the familiar "high."

dig—understand.

sideman—any outstanding individual in an orchestra.

gone—excellent.

cool—very hep, applied in the above context to what used to be described as "hot."

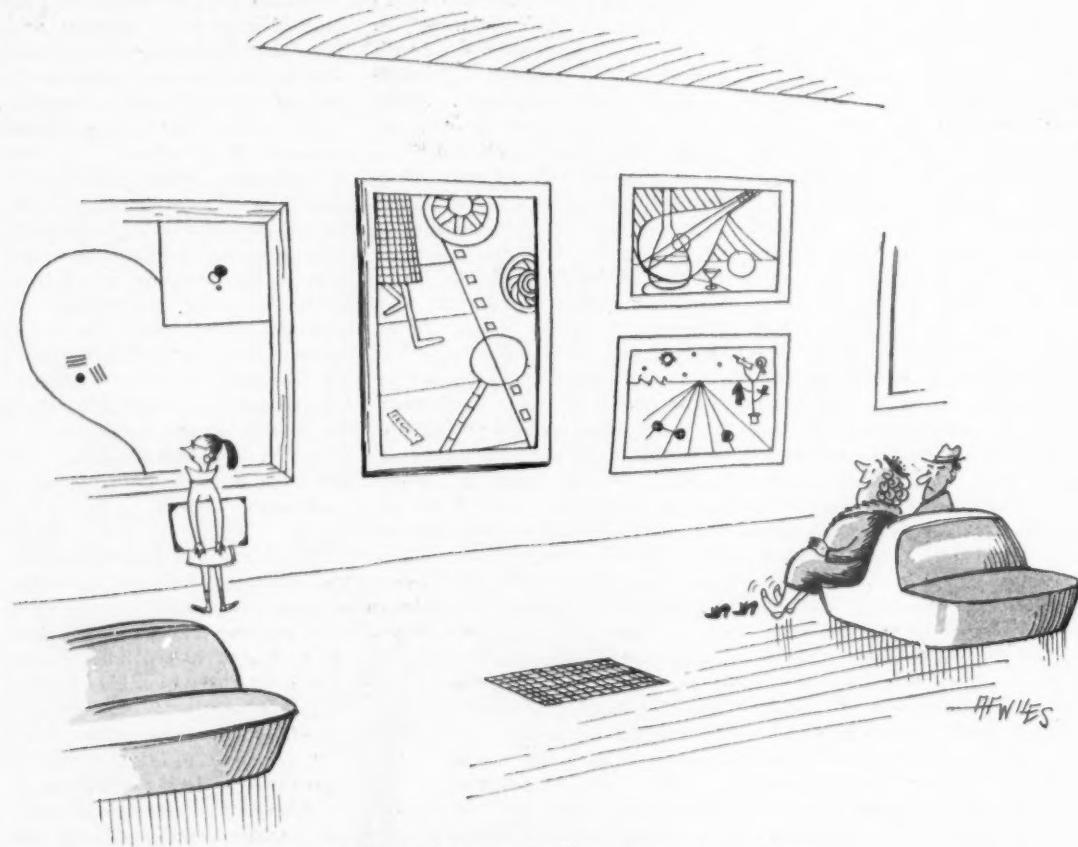
A fairly concise summary of the times in which we live is found—between the lines perhaps, but there, nevertheless—on the label of a bottle used by a manufacturer of soft drinks. His product, to be had in two or three dozen different flavors, is in this case called "True Fruit Black Raspberry—Natural Flavor, Natural Color."

In fine print at the side of the label one reads:

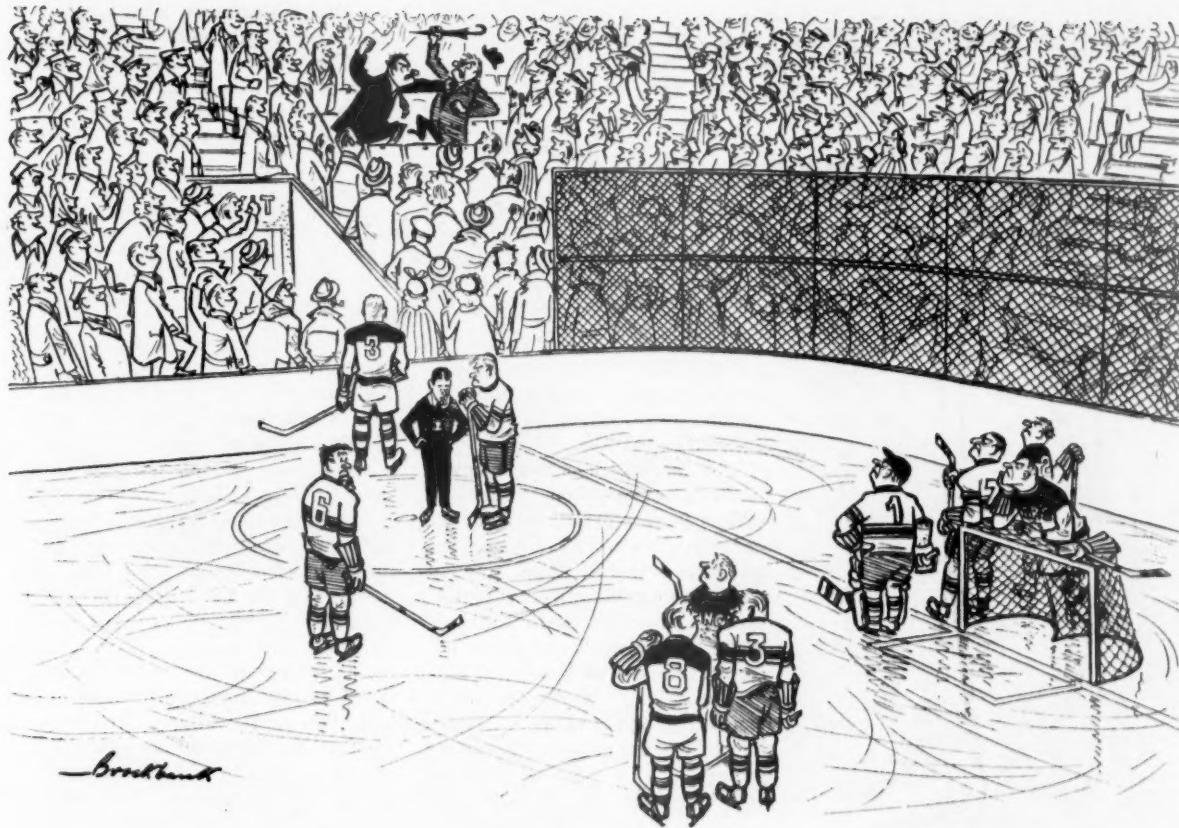
"Contains scientifically treated carbonated water, pure cane sugar, extractions of black and red raspberries and other natural flavors, raspberry juice, natural color, fruit acids and 1/20 of 1 per cent benzoate of soda."

"After an atomic blast, contents of this bottle may be used safely if bottle is thoroughly washed before removing crown."

CHARLES W. MORTON



"They look better now I've got my shoes off."



OLD SWADDY WONDERS

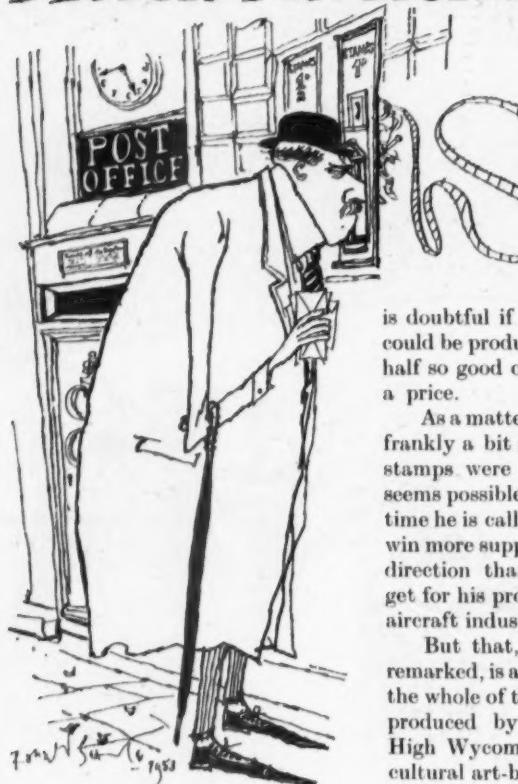
India Day, January 26

WE've marched out o' Hindustan,
the last flag's flown,
truck and tank and mule and man;
the Last Post's blown,
and Gunga Din has got his stripes—
I'll bet he's proud o' that:
but what 'v us Old Army types
and our old-sweats' way o' chat?
Will the new rookie-wallahs
take a dekko at a chit?
If we say "Char's up" for tiffin,
will they know what's meant by
it?
For when we talk o' cantonments,
a puggree or a peg,
it'll just be old ex-issue
like the puttee round your leg:
and the new-style body
won't take a second look
at the old-time swaddy
with his old bundook.

But perhaps they'll holler "Show a
leg!"
in the lines at Barrackpur
and talk o' flash and philabeg
and wish 'em back oncee more.
For an army gets its lingo
from a long way back
and it doesn't live on jingo
or that kind o' tack.
It'll take a foreign fashion
for the things it wants to name,
for it knows the simple swaddy
is everywhere the same.
And we'll both have our Bilati
if the call-up's made oncee more,
it'll be the same old Blighty
as it always was before.
For we've marched out o' Hindustan
and the Raj is hard to find,
but we've brought a bit out with us
and we've left a bit behind.

ALUN LLEWELLYN

DESIGN FOR LICKING



WHENEVER a new issue of stamps appears there is a keen rush to be first to write to *The Times* finding fault with it. This year's winner complained that the spacing between the letters of the words

POSTAGE
REVENUE

was too great compared with the space between the two lines of type, so that people would tend to read downwards instead of across. An investigation carried out by this paper amongst readers of postage stamps tends, however, to show that few of them read their stamps right through anyway, and that, of those that do, not many get beyond "PR OE SV" without trying an alternative approach. The general opinion in this office, at any rate, is that the new stamps are nicely written, very felicitously expressed, and handsomely illustrated, and represent on the whole a great triumph for private enterprise. It

is doubtful if a nationalized stamp could be produced which would look half so good or sell at so attractive a price.

As a matter of fact this office was frankly a bit surprised to find that stamps were *not* nationalized. It seems possible that Mr. Bevan, next time he is calling at Brown's, might win more support for a move in that direction than he seems likely to get for his proposals concerning the aircraft industry and so on.

But that, as Kipling so rarely remarked, is another story. Actually the whole of the nation's stamps are produced by a printing firm at High Wycombe, side by side with cultural art-books, Tarzan weeklies, wrappers for soap, and all the other change, small and large, of the commercial printer. It is only fair to admit, however, that they are dependent on contracts placed by the Postmaster General, and have not yet produced a private venture stamp in the way that aircraft manufacturers sometimes produce a private venture fighter.

The original design is selected from open competition and submitted to the Queen for her approval. In its first state at the factory it is a bit of a jigsaw; the photographed head forms one constituent, the lettering is done separately and stuck on, and the frame of roses, thistles, or what-have-you is drawn on another layer and laid over the first so as to vignette the Queen's head through a hole in the middle. At this stage it is roughly five by six inches in size, and monochrome.

This arrangement is then photographed so that it comes out as a negative some four times the area of the finished stamp. From this

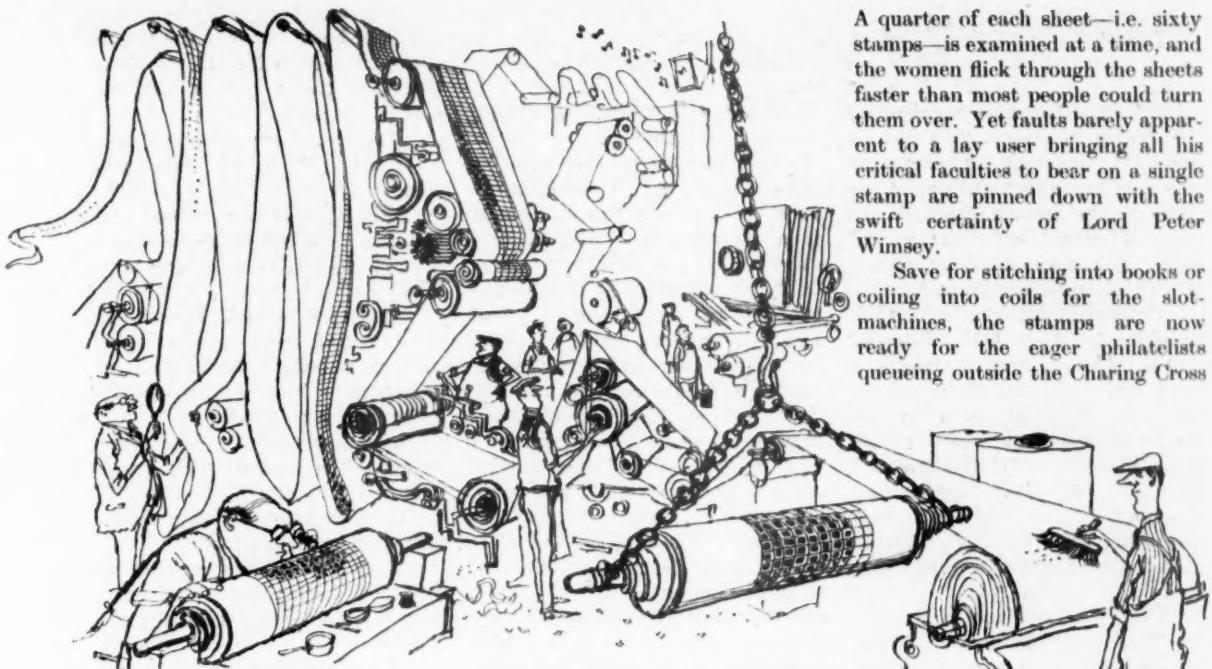
negative is then made what is called the "stepped-up positive."

The stepped-up positive consists of hundreds of photographs of the negative (which of course turn out positive), the actual size of the

final product and laid out side by side at the exact distance apart of stamps on a sheet. ("Exact" here means working to thousandths of an inch.) It is from these positives that the cylinders are etched (by a process which will be familiar to all those who are familiar with this sort of thing, but into which it is perhaps not necessary to go just now) from which the actual stamps will be printed. There are one man and a boy working the outsize camera which does the job, and a completed positive of six hundred exposures takes them about twelve hours' work.

From the etched copper cylinder a trial sheet is run off, given a reference number, and examined closely for errors. Inside each of the pencilled rings which you will see on a corrected sheet is some tiny fault, perhaps only visible through a lens—a fleck of white on a dark surface, or of dark on a white surface, or something of that kind. A man with a powerful magnifying glass and a graving-tool of extreme sharpness corrects these by adding, as it were, the missing dots on the screen or otherwise correcting the shortcomings of the etching fluid. As the number of dots in the screen is forty thousand to the square inch—too small even to suspect with the naked eye—this takes a mighty steady hand.

The specially-watermarked paper is supplied by the Post Office, and is treated with as much respect



as if it were gold-leaf. Even a little in the wrong hands would open the door to forgery, so every scrap must be accounted for. All waste is collected and weighed as meticulously as is the Aga Khan by the Mombasa Moslems, before being returned (in sealed bags) for repulping. The weight of issued stamps plus waste must agree strictly with the weight of paper and gum supplied.

The gum, incidentally, being designed for human consumption, has to pass the same purity tests as any other kind of confectionery. It is made of unalloyed gum arabic, with no artificial preservative or flavouring matter: a suggestion that 2½d. stamps should be given a taste of raspberries, 1½d. of lime, and so on, was not well received.

The gum is put on to the rolls of paper and baked dry before anything else happens to them. The paper is then "fractured" by being drawn across knife-edges, to break down the gum-film and prevent curling, and "calendered" under warm iron rollers to smooth the surface.

It is now ready for printing. There are four machines in use; two of them produce double-size sheets containing four hundred and eighty stamps each (for sale individually

over the counter) and the other two produce rolls of stamps two and a half miles long for turning into stamp-books and the somewhat smaller reels alleged to be contained in the slot-machines.

Nothing remains to be added but the perforation. The perforating dies consist of rows of little comb-teeth arranged in oblongs of the requisite size. The teeth are fitted in the dies by hand; the accuracy required for this operation is so extreme that the young lady who does it sits in a kind of brown paper tent to shield her from the temperature vagaries outside. Once through the perforating machines and the paper is no longer just paper; it is stamps, each of them worth the precise value inscribed on it.

Unless, of course, it is faulty. This would send its value up—if it ever got outside the printer's premises. But squads of eagle-eyed women examine every sheet and weed out anything with a spot on it, or a thin patch in the paper, or a fault in the perforation; and away goes that sheet, back to the mill in the sealed bag for pulping.

The speed at which this examination is made is quite incredible.

A quarter of each sheet—i.e. sixty stamps—is examined at a time, and the women flick through the sheets faster than most people could turn them over. Yet faults barely apparent to a lay user bringing all his critical faculties to bear on a single stamp are pinned down with the swift certainty of Lord Peter Wimsey.

Save for stitching into books or coiling into coils for the slot-machines, the stamps are now ready for the eager philatelists queuing outside the Charing Cross



Road Post Office to get the new issue franked with the first possible post-mark. How happy they were last November when, miraculous as manna and almost as profitable, a sheet actually turned up with a fault in one corner. But even without an actual lapse by the eagle-eyed, the philatelists always do their best; soon after the new three-halfpennies came out there were triumphant reports from collectors who had found specimens lacking the fractional bar in the ½.

Punch readers are, of course, observant enough to know why they were disappointed.

B. A. YOUNG

RESPONSIBILITY

THE Chief Draughtsman doodled on his memo pad. Outside his room the drawing office was as silent as the grave until one of the young lady tracers changed the angle of her table and then the small pulleys squeaked like baby mice.

The telephone bell rang.

"Drawing office here. C.D. speaking." The C.D. listened. "O.K., old boy. Bring it along, and we'll look into it." He put down the receiver and turned to the Senior Draughtsman, who was reading "Kempe's." "Tell Flinders I want our original and a photostat copy of drawing eight six nine stroke five two," he said. "Calvert says there's a mistake. Something to do with a thread."

Calvert entered the office.

"Ah," said the C.D. "Good morning, Mr. Calvert. Sorry you've found a snag, but we'll soon settle it." The hatch behind him opened, and Flinders passed the required drawings through. "Ah. Thank you, Flinders."

"Good morning, Mr. Birch," Calvert said.

The C.D. unrolled the drawings.

"Something to do with a thread, you said. Which is it?"

The foreman pointed with his six-inch steel rule. "This hole here," he said. "We've drilled and tapped it a quarter-inch B.S.F., as it's shown here."

"Ah, yes," the C.D. said softly, rubbing his ample chin. "And what's wrong with that?"

"That hole has to have a quarter-inch pipe screwed into it."

"Ah," the C.D. said wisely, fingering the lobe of his right ear. "Let me see." He looked at the original drawing, then turned and checked the photostat. "Ah," he exclaimed. "This is wrong." He turned to the foreman. "I thought it strange if we were at fault. You see, Mr. Calvert, I know how it is on the floor. Once you people in the shop think we've slipped up you're after us like a pack of hounds." He smiled, to show there was no ill feeling.

"Nay," Calvert said. "I thought we could square this job up without bringin' anybody else into it."

"Quite right, Mr. Calvert," said the C.D. "We can settle this

between ourselves." He looked at the right-hand corner of the photostat. "Traced by Miss Evans, I see. Tell Miss Evans I want her," he said to the S.D.

Miss Evans, shy and twentyish, appeared. "Yes, sir," she said timidly.

"Ah, Miss Evans. Come and look here. You traced this drawing."

The girl bent over the drawings. "Yes, sir."

"Then you really will have to be more careful. This original gives this hole as being tapped a quarter-inch B.S.P. You've been careless and shown it as B.S.F."

Miss Evans was flustered. She looked at the original. "The letter P is not quite clear," she faltered.

The C.D. pointed to the rubber-stamped: IF IN DOUBT—ASK.

"You could have checked it with the draughtsman," he said. "Anyone can see that's not a letter F."

"I'm—I'm sorry, sir."

"Please remember that I—I have to rectify mistakes like this. All right. That will do, thank you."

When Miss Evans had gone the C.D. spread out his hands in a gesture of hopelessness. "There you are," he said to the foreman. "You can see what I have to put up with." He glanced again at the photostat, then turned to the Senior Draughtsman. "Did you check this, Fred?"

The S.D. yawned. "I did give it just the once-over," he said. "Never thought she'd make a mistake like that."

"I passed it," admitted the C.D., "but remember being very busy with something else at the time." He turned to Calvert. "I'm much too busy to check every little detail. I'll alter this B.S.F. to read B.S.P. That should do it. What do you say?"

"Aye. I've told young Adams to open the hole up with the thirty-one sixty-fourth drill. That'll be O.K. for tappin' out for quarter-inch B.S.P."

The office relapsed into silence. The C.D. doodled on his memo pad.

Another snag had been overcome.



AT THE
PLAY

The Merchant of Venice (OLD VIC)—*The Princess and the Swineherd* (MERCURY)

WHEN all is said and done *The Merchant of Venice* hangs on two characters, and of both *Portia* and *Shylock*. Mr. HUGH HUNT takes an unconventional view which personally I applaud. We have somehow grown up with a fixed idea that *Portia* must be a rather stately young woman, eligible at least for a Victorian headmistress-ship, yet we have never failed to be worried by the sudden change of character when she unblushingly conducts the most preposterous marriage negotiations of all time, leaps happily into trousers, and triumphs in a shameless legal imposture. Now for once we can be satisfied. Miss IRENE WORTH explains the whole business by making her young and ready for adventure, a gay little rich girl whose brains and sensibility have to be brought out by circumstance. In the overtures at Belmont I think Miss WORTH overdoes the giggling with the servants, but the total effect makes sense and is charming; for *Portia* develops, handling the court scene with crisp assurance and falling head over heels in love. Once the pound of flesh is out of the way it is the lyric note that matters, and there this production comes out strongly.

As for the pattern of *Shylock*,

we have had too much cringing and oily sentiment. In dealing with such arrant cads as these Venetians show themselves to be there is little need to cringe, and rightly Mr. PAUL ROGERS suffers neither from curvature of the spine nor from a spectacular sense of inferiority. He plays *Shylock* drily, proudly, very Jewishly, and plays him well. The great line, "I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys," he says almost to himself with a paralysis of apprehension that turns one cold. Apart from him the Old Vic at present seems short of vivid personalities among its young men. Mr. DOUGLAS CAMPBELL is an amiable, not a striking, *Antonio*; Mr. ROBERT URQUHART's *Bassanio* appears at first surprised to find himself a romantic figure, and then takes to the idea considerably. Miss CLAIRE BLOOM, who can disguise her heart, is shrewdly cast as *Jessica*. There are also two object-lessons in the approach to Shakespeare's comedies, *Old Gobbo* being beautifully played by Mr. NEWTON BLICK—fitting perfectly into the general scheme—while *Launcelot Gobbo*, given the kerbside humour of a slick spiv by Mr. KENNETH CONNOR, tears the fabric to pieces. Shakespeare can

take hard knocks, but not so hard as that. Much more imaginative is Mr. JOHN WARNER's fanciful and amusing *Prince of Arragon*.

I grew heartily tired of the great glistening summer-house which rose and sank at funeral speed, demanding a trim voice crying "Caskets,



[*The Princess and the Swineherd*

The Emperor—Mr. CECIL TROUNCE

gold, silver, lead, going up!" but otherwise I was delighted by Mr. ROGER FURSE's sets, and his eighteenth-century dresses are enchanting.

Shakespeare has been better spoken and more uniformly well acted, but this production carries the feeling of poetry, it has authority where most needed, and above all it has zest.

In "Beauty and the Beast" Mr. NICHOLAS STUART GRAY paid children the rare compliment of writing a play for them in terms of wit. In his *The Princess and the Swineherd* the compliment is diluted, but remains welcome. The Hans Andersen story of the spoilt princess wooed by an artless prince with a rose and a nightingale is ingeniously extended, and in these studiously simple royal circles Mr. CECIL TROUNCE, Mr. ERNEST JAY, Miss CAROL MARSH and Mr. TONY BRITTON are entirely at home.

Recommended

For a good straight play, *The River Line* (Strand). For comedy, *Dear Charles* (New), with Yvonne Arnaud. For intelligent crime, *Dial "M" for Murder* (Westminster).

ERIC KEOWN



Portia—MISS IRENE WORTH

Shylock—MR. PAUL ROGERS



at the
PICTURES



The Yellow Balloon—The Prisoner of Zenda

IN a way, *The Yellow Balloon* (Director: J. LEE-THOMPSON) might be said to have the same theme as that uneven but interesting little film a few years ago called *The Magnet*: that is to say, its action turns essentially on a small boy's misunderstanding and belief that something he has done will get him into terrible trouble. The title again singles out the object of the boy's passionate longing, which leads him astray. But *The Magnet* was a light comedy; this is a melodrama with murder and some unpleasant, not merely comic, characters, one of whom is chiefly responsible for the boy's mistaken fear. This also has a script considerably less ingenious and inventive than that of the earlier film; particularly, it places some of its important scenes against backgrounds that have become commonplaces in the British crime story—the bombed buildings, the Tube station (a disused one, but that's not unfamiliar either), the pin-table saloon, the cheap café.

Moreover—let's get all the faults mentioned first—at certain points, notably in the invention and arrangement of the unsympathetic characters, the easy obvious line has been followed. A spiv and his associates are presented exactly as they have been presented before, in the confident and (I admit) quite justified assumption that every audience will laughingly approve, because it knows—from films—that that is exactly what spivs are like. The balloon itself is one symptom of artificiality: as compared with a magnet (on the face of it a more likely treasure for an eleven-year-old boy) it shows a determined striving for a sort of conventional artiness in defiance of more characteristic, but less serious, probability. But all this admitted, the picture is still well worth while. ANDREW RAY as the boy is not called on to act very much beyond looking scared and anxious; the strength of the story is in the devices of suspense that never seem to fail, and in the visual interest of the everyday backgrounds. The detail is not striking in its freshness, but on the other hand it is done with enough skill and competence to please. That really sums up the whole film.

Madeleine Carroll and Douglas Fairbanks ... and this time it's STEWART GRANGER, DEBORAH KERR and JAMES MASON; how do they compare? To be honest, I can't pretend to compare them. What is certain is that the old story itself comes



Mr. Palmer—KENNETH MORE
Frankie Palmer—ANDREW RAY



The Prisoner of Zenda
Rudolf Rassendyl—STEWART GRANGER

The new, sumptuous Technicolor version of *The Prisoner of Zenda* (Director: RICHARD THORPE) is plainly, among other things, M.G.M.'s answer to our Coronation. The scenes at the crowning of King Rudolf of Ruritania in eighteen-ninety-something are presented with a spectacular lavishness that certainly outdoes anything the average ticket-holder will see here next June, and the film spends a far greater proportion of its time on them than—as far as I remember—the book did. But then I dare say I remember two previous films of the story (this is said to be the fifth, all told) better than I remember the book. Lewis Stone, Alice Terry and Ramon Novarro . . . Ronald Colman,

over very successfully indeed. The big action scenes are outstanding: everything in the castle episode from the swimming of the moat to the running sword-fight at the end is prodigiously well done and impressive to watch. There are almost no false notes in the rest of the piece, either. But I certainly never thought that Mr. MASON would remind me even momentarily of Erich von Stroheim . . .

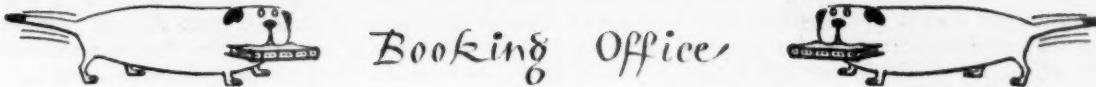
* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Secret Game, or Les Jeux Interdits (14/1/53) is the top film in London. *Les Sept Péchés Capitaux* (24/12/52) and that cheerful absurdity *The Crimson Pirate* (7/1/53) continue.

Not much among the new releases. *Folly to be Wise* (17/12/52) is good fun. Don't forget an earlier one full of excellent suspense, *The Steel Trap*. RICHARD MALLETT



Men against Man

Invisible Man. Ralph Ellison. *Gollancz*, 15/-

Midsummer Meadow. John Moore. *Collins*, 10/6

Who Goes Home. Maurice Edelman. *Wingate*, 10/6

INVISIBLE MAN, by Mr. Ralph Ellison, is an extraordinary novel, full of fantastic invention and fun and horror. It consists of a number of linked episodes, each of which has the super-reality of a landscape lit by lightning, and the effect is a little like Céline's "Voyage au Bout de la Nuit," though the conclusion is very different. Mr. Ellison is better on action and ideas than he is on people, whom he turns into types, and places, which he reduces to backcloths for his Negro narrator's progress through the pathology of race, class and nation. He is often brutal and coarse, never sadistic or obscene, and his tone towards the violence that rumbles through the whole story is gravely regretful.

The Invisible Man of the title is writing during a period of hibernation in a cellar to which he has fled in revulsion from the world of politics. He describes his expulsion from a Negro college (for embarrassing the Principal by inadvertently introducing a white trustee into disreputable black society), job-hunting in New York, a lunatic period in a mad paint factory, and his life as a Communist organizer in Harlem. The book ends with his deciding to emerge again into the world of social action. The set pieces of description, in particular the riots in Harlem, are magnificent, and so are the set speeches with which the rapid narrative is interspersed. What happens, however, is less important than the thesis that Mr. Ellison is arguing by means of his selection of events, and this deserves a thorough discussion for which I have neither the space nor, until the impact of the nightmare has worn off, the detachment.

How remote from this colourful savagery is the gentle world of Mr. John Moore, whose *Midsummer Meadow* is about a sweet old character, a retired doctor who collects odd information and creepy-crawlies and waifs. In his meadow there grows one of the very rarest of buttercups, and tremendous fights are waged to protect it against the Welfare State which is avid to uproot it. As well as the plant the meadow harbours a travelling show between its rounds of minor fairs. This show is a veritable gallimaufry of eccentrics over whom the doctor's benevolence oozes relaxingly. The story includes a little gentle sentiment and a little country lore and a little kindly laughter at village humours. There is also a sexy flavour to remind us that we are in the mid-twentieth century and not in the days when waifs and the lure of the open road and the smiles of retired persons at rural foibles were literary novelties.

And yet—hidden under this frank angling for the widest possible public is an honest attempt to dramatize

the conflict between individualism and state action. In a scene between the doctor and a probation officer, when the other side is allowed to put its case, the novel suddenly stops being coy and cosy and comes alive. Unhappily, this is a solitary oasis amid pixy wastes that make one wonder what on earth has happened to Mr. Moore and hope that he will soon be well again.

Mr. Maurice Edelman's *Who Goes Home* is another of his highly-polished, up-to-the-minute political melodramas. Its plot is that late Victorian favourite, the fatal indiscretion of the rising young Minister; but its setting is contemporary, with American aid, import licences and gambling debts. There is a good deal of well presented Parliamentary detail and the tension never sags. Only a fellow M.P. could criticize the accuracy of Mr. Edelman's setting; but to an outsider it has the odd unreality of Wilde's plays or early Buchan. I enjoyed this expert entertainment a lot without becoming much engaged with either its characters or its politics, both of which are more decorative than convincing.

R. G. G. PRICE

The Communist Technique in Britain. Bob Darke. *Collins*, 10/6

This is a sad book in every way. The author, a former Communist leader in Hackney, is a pitiful figure struggling to recover his self-respect and trying to explain why he was for so long—eighteen years—in the wilderness. Even more pitiful are his old colleagues, the purblind, ranting simpletons who worship Marx and live for the day of revolution.



Hollowood

"It's quite simple really—he's getting plenty of nourishment, but not quite enough food."

Theirs are such narrow, stupid, sordid, wasted lives. "If Ann and I went to the cinema (and God knows we went rarely) a Party member was sure to see me and report me to the branch. If I took a holiday (which I did not) the Party would have worried because I was wasting the Party's time on selfish pleasures." There are no startling revelations here, only a sketchy account of one weak man's acceptance of the Communist creed, its rigid discipline and double-dealing, and of his ultimate escape into sanity. But we are told and warned again and again that Communism can get a hold in Britain only if the unions allow themselves to be hoodwinked. "The real fight . . . is in the unions," says one comrade, "and on the industrial front. The rest is all window-dressing. Bourgeois elections are not the Party's main aim . . . they are merely valuable propaganda." A. B. H.

Lincoln and His Generals. T. Harry Williams. *Hamish Hamilton*, 21/-.

This study, rich though it is in evidence to support the great president, is too honest to put an end to controversy. If it shows Lincoln as the first among a crowd of amateur strategists to learn the bitter arts of total war and compelled to supplement and discard his rather incredible commanders one after the other for simple inefficiency, it does no less emphasize his lack of that ability to select the right man in the first place that should have been his own particular function. In the result the partisans of McClellan can continue to argue that, given a freer hand in the campaign of the peninsula he could have shortened the affair by at least a year,

and the admirers of Grant will still claim for him all the credit for the planning of final victory. Almost incidentally here is a coherent and dramatic account of a horrible confused conflict not much more than twice as remote as the first world war. C. C. P.

The Boy Who Saw Tomorrow. Ian Niall. *Heinemann*, 12/6

The boy is the son of a country carpenter. When he is five years old, and standing in his father's orchard, he "sees" a demented old neighbour drowning himself in a pond. In baby language he tells his parents, and then the thing happens. Other visions follow, and as a result of one of them the carpenter is charged with incendiarism with the object of claiming insurance. Publicity becomes a menace to the family and tragedy surrounds them. That, perhaps, is the flaw in a cleverly constructed book, written with the calmness that the theme demands, for one shining vision would have brought relieving light to the shade. As it is, we are allowed no hope of a happy ending, no joy and no surprises, and must believe in the darkness.

B. E. B.

SHORTER NOTES

The Shores of Light. Edmund Wilson. *W. H. Allen*, 25/-. Another "literary chronicle," wider in range and considerably larger than *Classics and Commercials*: ninety-seven pieces in 814 pages (but the book is surprisingly small, easy to handle and to read), nearly all concerned with writings and personalities of the 'twenties and 'thirties. Profoundly stimulating and illuminating criticism—the subjects range from Ring Lardner to Eliot, from Houdini to Malraux—and a sprinkling of satires, dialogues and sketches: "a kind of panorama" of the intellectual life of a very lively period.

"Matty." A. E. Matthews. *Hutchinson*, 16/-. Delightfully irresponsible autobiography that resolutely declines to put its subject on a pedestal. Starting his stage career as call-boy at the Princess's nearly seventy years ago, Matthews has been a magnet for absurd adventures all round the world, has known everybody in the theatre, and now at a youthful eighty-three is the last fine flower of the Hawtrey school. Tells many good stories, and is charmingly introduced by Noel Coward.

Ulanova and the Development of the Soviet Ballet. V. Bogdanov-Berezovsky. *MacGibbon and Kee*, 18/-. A leading Soviet ballet critic writes with knowledge and understanding of Soviet Russia's greatest ballerina, her technique, her aesthetic and her achievements. Those who have seen her fleetingly on the screen will share his enthusiasm—though not all his ideas of ballet history—and wish all the more to see her in the flesh.

My Civilized Adventure. Jack McLaren. *Peter Nevill*, 15/-. Experiences of a popular broadcaster in places as widely separated as Bloomsbury and the Barrier Reef, Corsica and the Cape York Peninsula, and among human contacts as dissimilar as Montmartre *poucres* and South Sea pearl divers; all shrewdly observed and amusingly told.

In Another Country. David Davidson. *Falcon Press*, 12/6. Adventures of a crude and decidedly fatuous young American in a Bloomsbury boarding-house as remembered by his middle-aged self, who seems to have retained the oddest impression of the manners and customs of the English. Recommended only to those whose appetite for sex is voracious and unfastidious.

Listening to Music. Roger Fiske. *Harrap*, 8/6. Written by an expert in schools broadcasting as a "Plain Man's Guide to Music"—an excellent idea but too slight in execution to discharge its avowed duty to beginners of all ages. A later edition might conveniently be enlarged in scope and the letterpress lose its faint air of condescension.

The New Shoe. Arthur Upfield. *Heinemann*, 10/6. Australian whodunit, third of the series in which the detective is an aboriginal called Napoleon Bonaparte. Refreshing novelty of background, but the plot is cluttered and the narrative sags after a taut start.



"Provided it's a good game, I
don't much care who wins . . ."

SUCCESS FOR NINEPENCE

SINCE Mr. Godwin's shop is about the size of a large cabin-trunk, it doesn't seem possible that he could lose anything in it, but he does. He loses things all the time. In his more tragic moments he loses everything at once, and cowers helplessly behind an enormous cardboard toothbrush, wringing his hands and blinking up at the shelves. It is very sad.

"Never mind," I say. "I'll call back later."

But Mr. Godwin knows that people *never* call back later, and he begins to scramble frenziedly about on a spidery ladder, knocking down bottles of liquid paraffin, steadying himself with one foot on a showcase full of powder-puffs, and muttering in Latin as he pulls the knobs off drawers marked "Sod. Bicarb." and "Teething Rings." As the dusk deepens, silent figures edge into the shop and huddle together, waiting for prescriptions. They read the advertisements for non-alcoholic wines, and Mr. Godwin frets among them on his knees, sliding open glass doors which jam half-way, straining at the huge packages of cotton-wool and baby-food which brood about the floor from year to year. At last, with a despairing look over his shoulder, he scurries away into the dark beyond the dispensary, and tumbles down a flight of wooden stairs. I don't know what he keeps in the cellar, but every time he goes down there he throws it all about in a panic-stricken way, and emerges with one hook of his glasses off his ear and a frightened look in his eye.

"Will this do?" he asks, holding up something quite ridiculous, and I say it will, and we both know it won't, and he has to hunt through a cardboard box full of old invoices to find the retail price, and by the time the transaction is complete the place is so full that I can't reach the door without bringing down a pyramid of loofahs.

In July he knows exactly where to look for a hot-water bottle, and



"Don't come too near me, I've got a terrible cold."

in January he will eagerly offer a variety of cooling drinks. If he opens a box labelled "Combs: 1/4d." it will be full to the brim with throat pastilles, and he will be as bewildered as you are. He has so much stock that he can barely move behind his counter, and when the shop is closed you can see him through the window, poking about in a dim light, trying to sort it all out. He works in a perpetual nightmare, pathetically waiting for the day when he will be able to say to a customer "Yes, sir; certainly, sir," and reach out deftly and slap down

on the counter the very article the customer requires.

I had hoped for a long time to be that lucky customer, because I wanted to see the delight on Mr. Godwin's face, to share his little triumph. I felt that if it could only happen once, a weight would be lifted from his shoulders, and the shop would no longer sneer down at him from its cluttered shelves and smug little drawers and cupboards. He would gain confidence. He would stride about the shop efficiently and chat about the weather.

Well, yesterday I was that

customer. I have to admit I cheated in a way, because when I entered the shop I didn't want anything at all. I had formed a plan, and I carried it out like a confidence trickster.

Mr. Godwin peeped out from his dispensary, and his face assumed its familiar expression of baffled apprehension. He brushed some lethal-looking white powder from his cuff, and came and faced me with a brave smile.

"Yes, sir?" faltered Mr. Godwin.

Very calmly I pointed to a display of wrapped toilet soap which was lurking rather dustily at one end of the counter.

"I want one of those, please," I said. I said it as though it were the most natural thing in the world, and I placed on the counter three pennies and a sixpence, for the price was plainly marked.

I don't think I shall easily forget the look of relief that lit up Mr. Godwin's eyes. I shall certainly remember for a long time the fussy pride with which he swathed the packet in three thicknesses of tissue-paper, and the nonchalant way he flung the ninepence into his till. I

realized, of course, even as I thrust it into my pocket, that I had bought a dummy carton filled with shavings, but that is not the point. The point is that as I left the shop Mr. Godwin marched back proudly into his dispensary, humming a little tune.

ALEX ATKINSON

& &

POST-GRADUETTE

I WAS at Newnham, by the Cam;
Grannie never read a book.
Watch me mince last Tuesday's
ham;

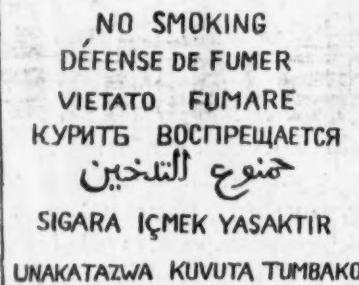
Grannie had to have a cook.

Latin makes you wise and happy;
Poor uneducated Grannie!
Latin helps me wash this nappy;
Grannie had to have a Nannie.

Mine was a pretty good degree;
Grandmamma could hardly spell.
See how well I get the tea;
Grannie had to ring a bell.

Newnham ruined my papa;
That's how families progress.
Would I swap with Grandmamma?
There's no Latin word for "yes."

JUSTIN RICHARDSON



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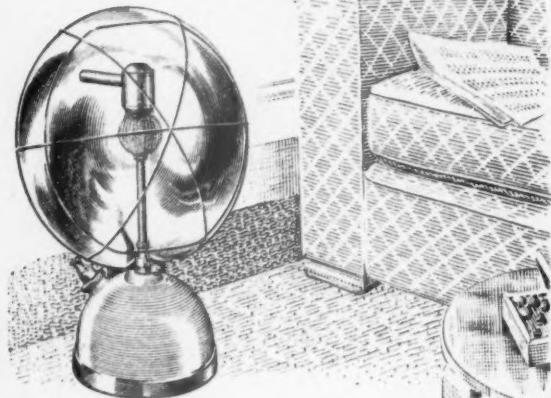
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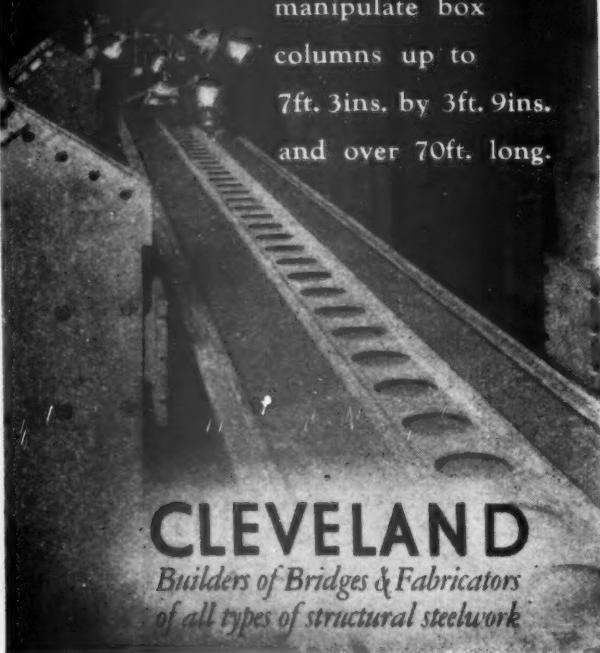


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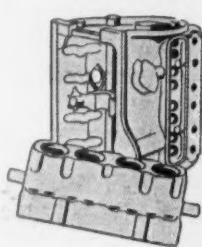
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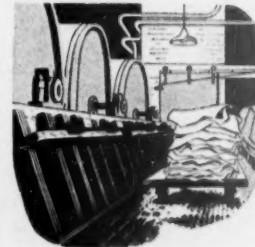
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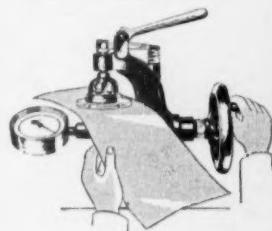
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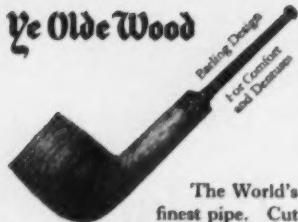
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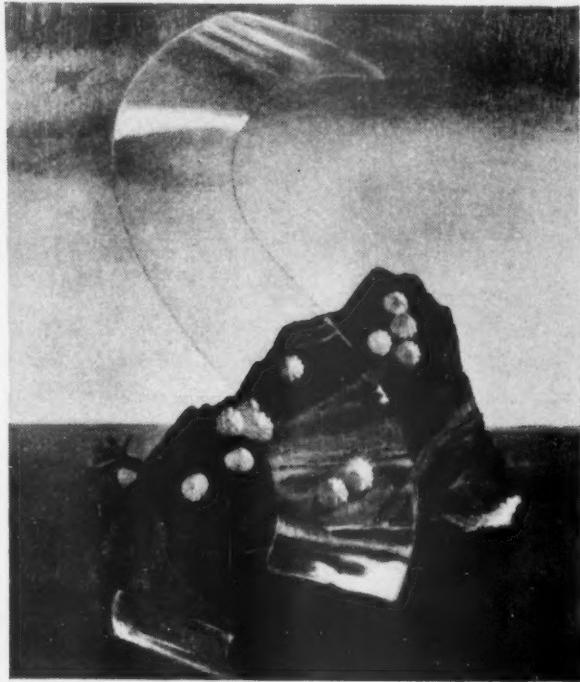
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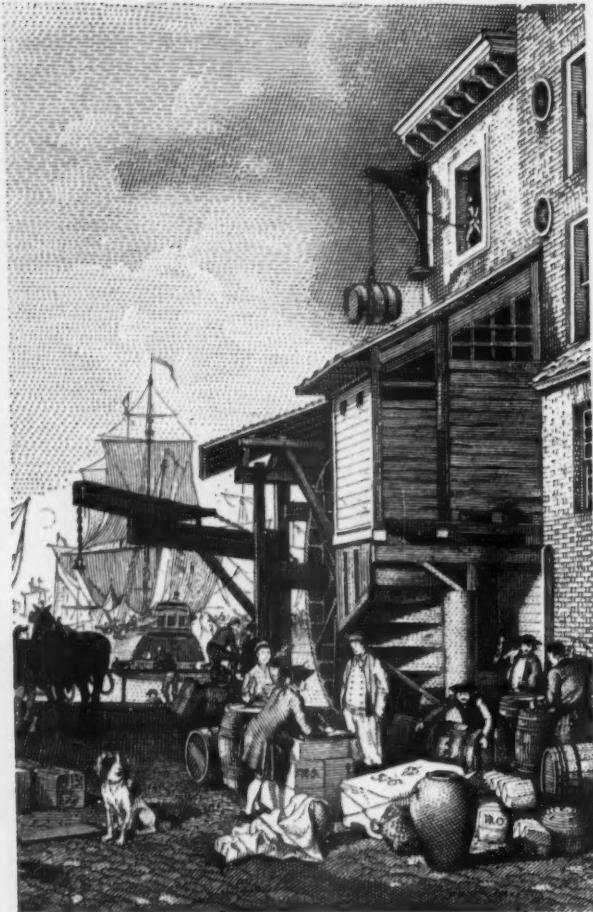
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Punch, January 21 1953



THE CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY

THIS REPRODUCTION after the painting by Samuel Scott (1702-1772), now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is an early example of the application of art to the romance of commerce. It is believed to represent Bear Quay between the Custom House and London Bridge and is one of many riverside scenes painted by Scott which form an invaluable record of the London of the eighteenth century.

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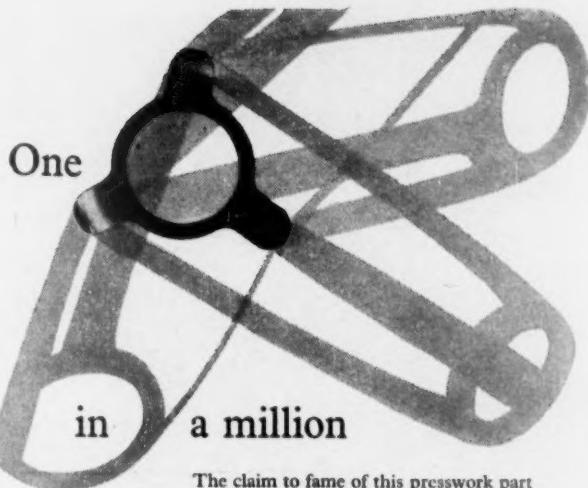
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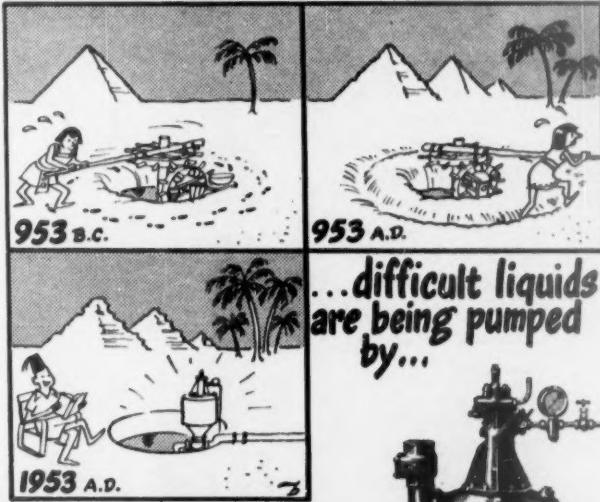
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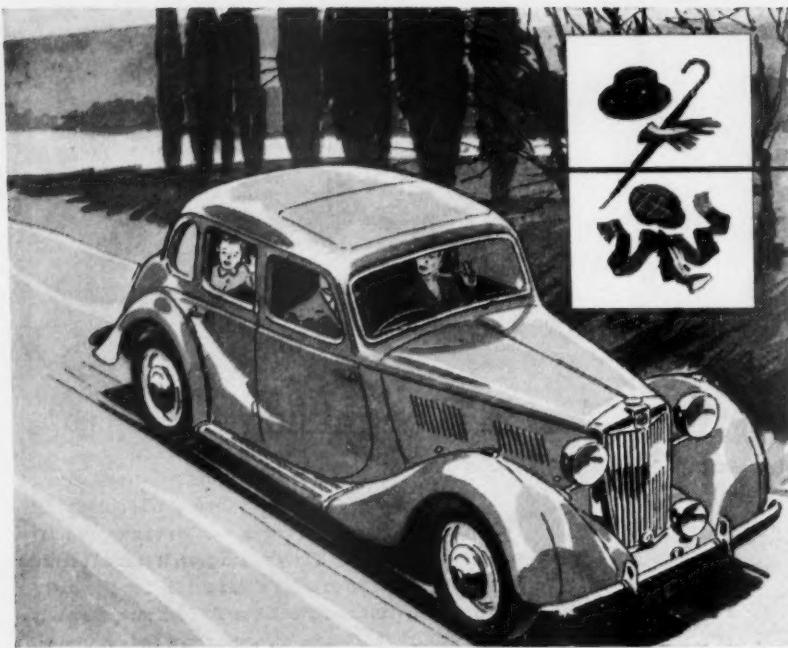
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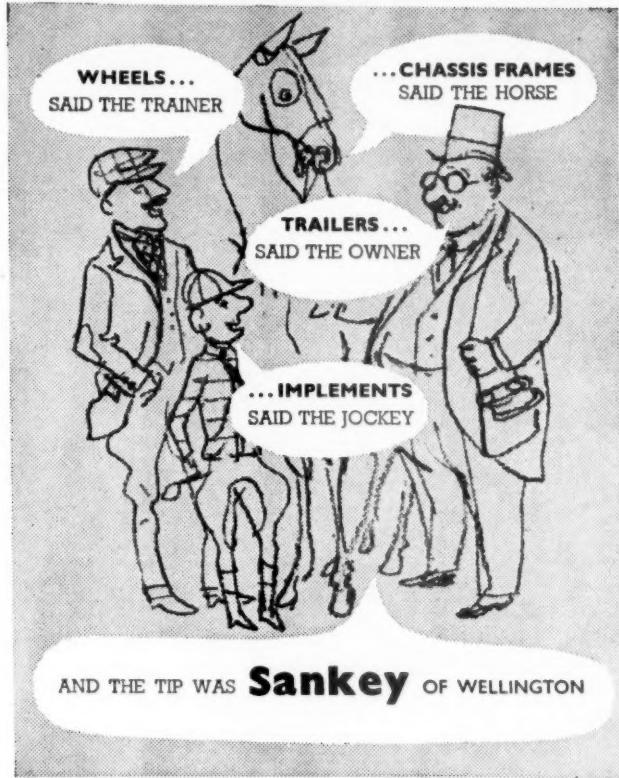
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